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ABSTRACT

This workbook is part of a series devoted to all areas of charter-school development. Fourth in the series, this volume focuses on governance and management, with an emphasis on creating an organizational structure, establishing strong leadership, handling personnel issues, creating a board and board bylaws, managing growth, and dealing with liability issues. The text is divided into five sections. Section one examines governance and management issues and demonstrates why governance is important for charter schools. It discusses the board's role, how to develop committees, and how to plan for transition. This is followed by section two, which shows how to write a business plan and how to establish a sound financial system. The next section discusses leadership issues, leadership styles, and the importance of teamwork. Since employees are a key component in charter-school success, personnel issues are discussed in section four. This segment examines employee-selection practices and personnel policies, such as terms of employment, compensation, and benefits. The last section details internal policy development and raises such concerns as student/parent involvement, discipline, fiscal management, and student development. Each section features a selection of "tools" that contain activities to help generate ideas and lists helpful resources and other information. (RJM)

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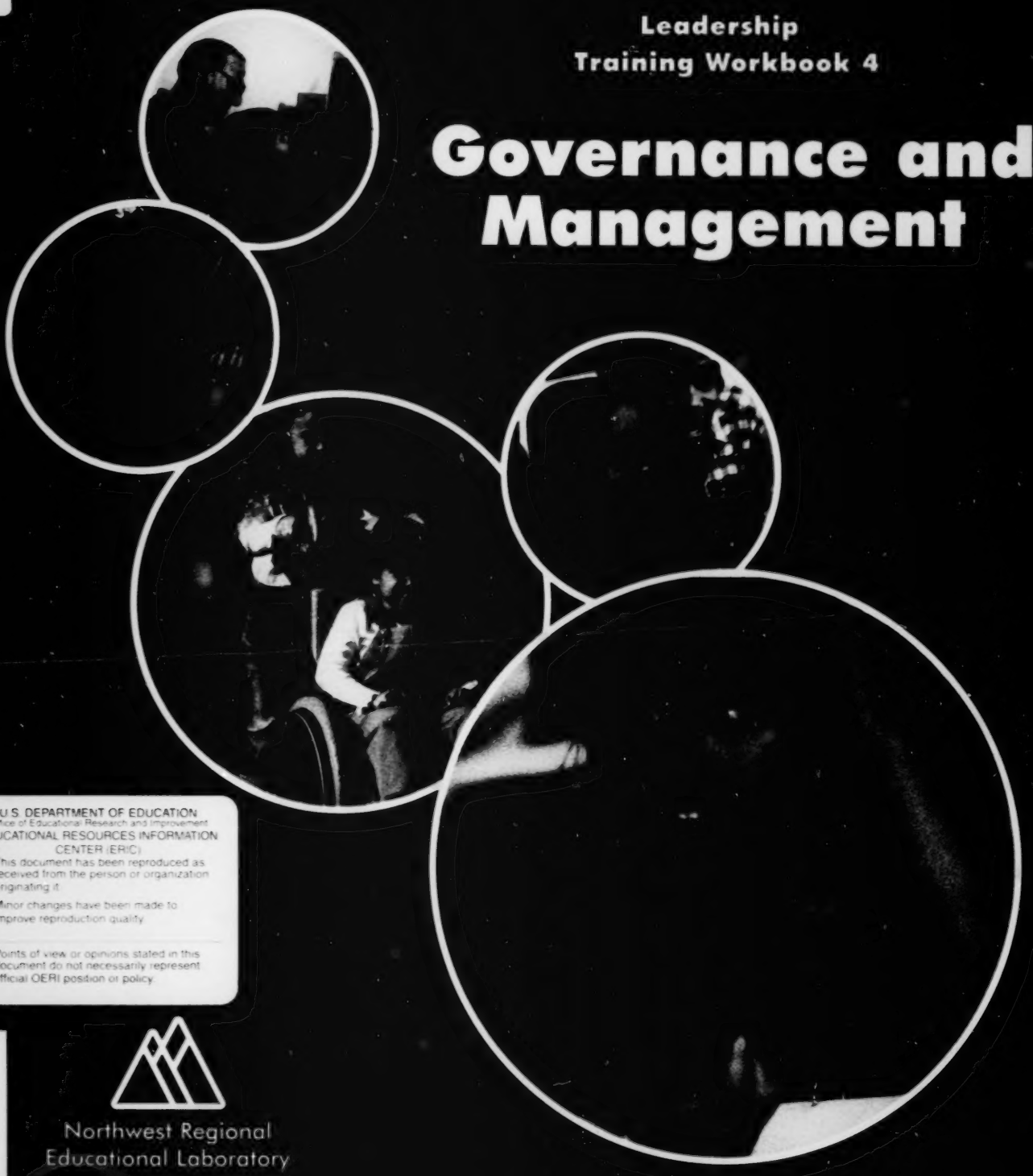
Charter Starters

Leadership
Training Workbook 4

Governance and Management



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Charter Starters
Leadership Training
Workbook 4

Governance and Management

Rural Education Program
Dr. Joyce Ley, Director

July 1999

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Preface

The Charter Starters Workbook series provides material and resources in all areas of charter school development. The material is based on five core content areas, and each workbook in the series is meant to stand alone:

- **Workbook 1: Start-Up Logistics**—drafting a charter, creating a vision and mission, developing a core founding group, accessing expert information, navigating the application process, acquiring a facility, allocating resources, establishing a legal entity, and contracting for services
- **Workbook 2: Regulatory Issues**—special education requirements, civil rights regulations, federal and state laws and regulations, and requirements for parent involvement
- **Workbook 3: Assessment and Accountability**—academic accountability, fiscal accountability, public/parental accountability, rule compliance, assessment and evaluation, financial management, developing a business plan, and how vision and mission connect with assessment and accountability
- **Workbook 4: Governance and Management**—creating an organizational structure, establishing strong leadership, handling personnel issues, developing internal policies, creating a board and board bylaws, managing growth, and dealing with liability issues
- **Workbook 5: Community Relations**—coordinating public relations, marketing the school, and dealing with controversy

The workbooks are targeted toward both charter school founders/developers and charter school trainers. Although originally designed as the training material for a five-day training academy, each workbook is relatively self-contained. This workbook contains information on Governance and Management.

Two precautions:

1. *The information that is provided in this workbook is not intended to be prescriptive. We encourage charter school founders to be creative and to innovate as they develop unique schools that serve the needs of their communities.*
2. *All information contained in this workbook should be considered as informational only and should not substitute for legal advice. We recommend that charter school developers obtain legal counsel whenever appropriate. We also advise that materials in this workbook, whenever possible, be tailored according to state specifications; the information in the workbook is not state-specific.*

Preface

Conventions and features used in the series

Resource tools follow each subsection of each workbook. These tools fall into five categories: activities, samples, checklists, detailed information, and resources. References to tools within workbooks are labeled with icons so you can easily identify each tool's category.

Tools labeled	Are
	Activities to help you actually begin working on ideas and solutions.
	Sample forms/policies for you to use as examples in making your own forms and policies.
	Checklists to help you keep track of what's done and what you still need to work on.
	Detailed information on a particular issue, such as a matrix, list of addresses, or federal regulation.
	Resources that list places to go for more information, including the Internet.

NWREL staff are available to provide assistance and direction in using the workbooks to develop training sessions for charter school developers. This includes providing training based on workbooks and/or providing assistance in finding expert trainers for specific topics. Additional questions, comments, or recommendations regarding the information in the workbook series are welcome and can be addressed to the Rural Education Program (phone: 1-800-547-6339, ext. 546; e-mail: ruraled@nwrel.org).

Governance and Management Issues

Why Is Governance Important for Charter Schools?

"No other singular variable is more important for the health and vitality of a school than the way it is governed. Teacher competencies, student achievements, parental and community support, adequate facilities and resources are all critical and essential for success. Governance will determine how those characteristics are initiated, managed, supported, and promoted."

—Gary Gruber[1]

Roles and Responsibilities of the Board

Generic Responsibilities of the Governing Board[2]

- Determine and uphold your school's mission and vision
- Select the executive or principal
- Support the executive, and review his or her performance
- Ensure effective organizational planning
- Ensure adequate resources
- Manage resources effectively
- Determine and monitor the organization's programs and services
- Enhance the organization's public image
- Serve as a court of appeal
- Assess the board's own performance and recruit new members

Legal Responsibilities of Nonprofit Boards[3]

Duty of Care

The duty of care describes the level of competence that is expected of a board member, and is commonly expressed as the duty of "care that an ordinarily prudent person would exercise in a like position and under similar circumstances." This means that a board member owes the duty to exercise reasonable care when he or she makes a decision as a steward of the organization.

1 From a presentation by Gruber, G., *Governance of and for schools*
2 Ingram, R.T. (1988). *Ten basic responsibilities of nonprofit boards*
3 From the National Center for Nonprofit Boards. *The legal obligations of nonprofit boards: A guidebook for board members*

Duty of Loyalty

The duty of loyalty is a standard of faithfulness; a board member must give undivided allegiance when making decisions affecting the organization. This means that a board member can never use information obtained as a member for personal gain, but must act in the best interests of the organization.

Duty of Obedience

The duty of obedience requires board members to be faithful to the organization's mission. They are not permitted to act in a way that is inconsistent with the central goals of the organization. A basis for this rule lies in the public's trust that the organization will manage donated funds to fulfill the organization's mission.

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest exists when the personal or professional concerns of a board member or a staff member affect his or her ability to put the welfare of the organization before personal benefit. A policy on conflict of interest should include:

1. Full disclosure—board members and staff members in decisionmaking roles should make known their connections with groups doing business with the organization on an annual basis
2. Board member abstention from discussion and voting—if an actual or potential conflict of interest is identified, board members should not participate in discussions or vote on matters that would be affecting the transactions between the organization and the other group
3. Staff member abstention from decisionmaking—staff members who have an actual or potential conflict should not be involved in decisionmaking affecting such transactions

Roles and Responsibilities of Board Members

When recruiting new members, seek traits and characteristics of a good board member.

A board member should have three of these in any combination:

- Industry—willingness to commit the time and energy to the work that needs to be done
- Intellect—intelligent people who understand education, including the "big picture" of education

- Expertise—individuals with experience in real estate, law, or other skilled practitioners
- Affluence—individuals or corporations can contribute funds as well as in-kind donations (this characteristic alone is no reason to include someone on your board)
- Influence—political, social, economic
- Leadership—proven skills in more than one setting
- Time—available time and willingness to commit that time to the board

Seek individuals who demonstrate active and responsible behaviors of a board member:

- Comes to meetings well-prepared and informed (minutes have been distributed and read)
- Supports the school in a variety of ways—attends events, participates in activities
- Is able to respect confidentiality
- Understands long-range effects of decisions
- Requests information that is accurate
- Maintains up-to-date knowledge of activities
- Visits school up-close to see effects firsthand
- Understands that the chief administrator reports to the board as a whole and not to any one individual
- Knows the difference between what is good for his or her individual child and the children in the school as a whole
- Promotes the school within the community

When recruiting new board members, it may be helpful to assess your board's expertise to see where additional help is needed. Consultants are often hired in an attempt to meet these needs. See the Core Founding Group and Accessing Experts sections of *Workbook 1: Start-Up Logistics* for more information.

Selecting a Governance Structure

The first priority in discussing governance should be to review your charter for governance requirements. While taking these requirements into account, the governance structure should be tailored to your school's vision, mission, and goals. Every board has the responsibility to develop its own structure, policies, and procedures.

The Center for School Change[4] at the University of Minnesota has conducted a national review of charter school governance. The sample consisted of 30 charter schools from nine states that were interviewed to uncover key elements of successful structures that were common among schools demonstrating improved achievement as measured by standardized tests and other forms of assessment. These schools:

- Adopted a structure that reflects the school's mission, goals, and objectives
- Designed a structure that reflects the state charter law
- Used some form of shared decisionmaking
- Created at least one committee/council to address specific issues such as curriculum, finance, and staff development
- Produced a document that explains which decisions are made by whom (i.e., governing board, administrator, committee/council)
- Involved a variety of people in the governing board or in committees/councils
- Employed board training seminars, conferences, and/or retreats
- Selected board members who shared the school's mission
- Focused on generating a vision and plan for school improvement
- Had relatively simple organization, without multiple levels of bureaucracy
- Were flexible and able to adapt to changing situations
- Stayed true to the mission, vision, or purpose
- Considered the clients' (students') needs at all times

4 Cheung, S., & Nathan, J. (1999). *What works? Governing structures of effective charter schools*

Generic Models of Governance

One way to look at governance is to look at different models for school boards. These models exist on a continuum and are not mutually exclusive. Most schools have some sort of a combination of the following models.

Model of Governance	Decisionmaking	Committee Structure	Member Characteristics	Advantages/ Disadvantages
"School Committee"	Delegate management to one or more members; decisions are often reached through consensus; takes a lot of time and commitment	Always discuss as a whole rather than in subcommittees	Parents and teachers are dominant; members are elected or appointed Criteria for membership: desire to see school mission met fully and completely; focus on matters that affect teachers and parents; pride and honor in being a member	Advantages: More collaboration, freedom, autonomy, peer-based decisionmaking Disadvantages: Unclear leadership; lack of understanding of who is responsible and/or accountable; may be time-consuming and burdensome for members.
"Traditional Model"	Well-defined with published rules; formal votes taken and recorded in minutes	Committees make recommendations to the board for approval	Parent representation is welcome, but not dominant; seeks balance in representation—written in bylaws; expertise is crucial	Advantages: Clear leadership; clear understanding of accountability and responsibility Disadvantages: It is the same old system; teachers don't feel ownership; parents might feel alienated
"Entrepreneur Model"	CEO makes final decisions	Advisory committee to the chief executive officer	Corporate model	Advantages: Clear leadership Disadvantages: Not always appropriate for schools; no shared decisionmaking

Governance Policies

Whatever the type of governing structure you choose, certain issues should be addressed:

- Relationships in the organization should be clearly stated and understood.
- Policies need to be clearly stated:
  - — State who is responsible for what tasks or duties.
  - — State who is to be held accountable and/or evaluated.
  - — State the specific organizational structure.
  - — Plan for transition. If you are a conversion school, your board may need to address how to go from an advisory role to more of a decisionmaking role. Plan for how to adapt when members leave, including founders.
- Dangers of micro management.

What Should Be in the Bylaws?

- Description of the powers of the board
- The number of members on the board and their characteristics
- Process by which board is elected or formed (list of officers, their role and term)
- Designation of advisory board (if applicable)
- Designation of meetings:
  - — Type, time, recognition of open meeting laws, attendance
  - — State specific laws regarding public meetings
  - — Notice of and action at meetings
- Committees:
  - — Designation
  - — Types
  - — Nominating process

- Relationship to staff:
  - — Day-to day operations
  - — Hiring
  - — Use of a CEO/administrator

Board Manual

A board manual can be used as an orientation guide for new board members and as a resource for continuing board members. Keep the information in the board manual concise to avoid board members from feeling overwhelmed.

See Tool I: Board Manual Checklist (Page 11)
and
Tool II: Bylaws Checklist (Page 12) for examples of possible bylaws

Developing Committees

Committees are typically formed to perform certain tasks and to report to the whole board for final decisions and action. The number, size, and type of committees a school has will vary depending on your school's mission, vision, and governance structure. Clarification of committee roles and responsibilities is highly important. Committees should be expected to provide timely, accurate information to the board.

Two Types of Committees

1. Standing committees—permanent committees, established in bylaws, that relate to the ongoing governance of the school
2. Ad hoc, or special committees—limited charges and are created for specific purposes; may be disbanded when the need for them no longer exists[5]

5 Hizzy, E.C. (1993). *Nonprofit board committees: How to make them work.*

Basic Standing Committees Your School May Need

1. Committee on Trustees or Nominating Committee—in charge of self-management of the board (i.e., orienting and training new board members, evaluating the board)
2. Strategic Planning Committee—responsible for designing and developing both short- and long-term plans that are intended to fulfill the mission of the school
3. Finance Committee—responsible for the fiscal matters of the school; works with business manager; may acquire additional funds for the school

Board Member Development

Successful boards make board member development a priority. Ideas for making board member development a priority in your school include:

- Hold retreats or one-day, in-house sessions that focus on team building every year or two.
- Revisit the mission and vision often.
- Clarify roles and responsibilities of the board early; create job descriptions for board members.
- Plan for member development and leadership training.
- Keep members informed, and hold effective board meetings.
- Promote a positive relationship with the school through clear policies and procedures.
- Conduct new board member orientations and training.
- Offer continuous board development opportunities.
- Evaluate your board and board members on a continuous basis. The design of your evaluation will vary depending on the governance structure of your school. A third party is often needed to provide an unbiased view of your board.

Consultants are often hired to conduct board training, evaluation, and development opportunities. See the Core Founding Group and Accessing Experts sections of *Workbook 1: Start-Up Logistics* for more information.

Planning for Transition

You will need to plan for the transition from the planning stage to the operational stage of development that begins when staff are hired and planning members take on new roles as staff, teachers, and/or board members.

Questions To Consider

- Should a founder be on the governing board or on the staff?
- What is the relationship between founders, the board, and day-to-day operators?
- Do all the founders want to remain involved in the school, or on the board?
- How will new board members be recruited as the founders leave the governing board?
- What skills and areas of expertise are needed in different stages of development?
- Will the board be able to maintain the workload of a committee of the whole or do you need to establish standing committees as your school grows?
- How will you transition from managerial tasks to policy and strategic planning?

"Change has a considerable psychological impact on the human mind. To the fearful it is threatening because it means that things may get worse. To the hopeful it is encouraging because things may get better. To the confident it is inspiring because the challenge exists to make things better."

—*King Whitney, Jr.*

Suggestions

In the earlier stages of development, it may be more common for the board to engage in more managerial tasks. However, as the board matures, it is to the benefit of the school to shift the focus of the board to policy and strategic planning. This shift allows the board to govern and the administrators to manage. This will keep current board members more fully engaged as it aids in alleviating boredom, conflict, and frustration that can occur from a board that gets tied into managing the day-to-day routine tasks. Board members who focus on policy and strategic planning often feel more interested and intrinsically satisfied as their skills are more fully utilized. Suggestions of ways to be strategically focused include:[6]

- Create clear expectations for the board. Written descriptions of the board's basic responsibilities can help solidify the role of the governing board.

6 Chait, R.P. (1994). *How to help your board govern more and manage less.*

- Create clear expectations for the chief executive officer.
- Structure meetings to direct the board's attention to matters of policy and strategy. This can be done through a clear agenda.
- Collect feedback on the board's performance.

See John Carver's *Boards that Make a Difference: A New Design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1990 and *Reinventing Your Board: A Step-by-Step Guide to Implementing Policy Governance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass Publishers. John Carver offers a governance structure that helps to ensure that your board remains focused on making policies.

Tool I: Board Manual Checklist[7]

This checklist is intended to be used as a checklist of possible components of your board manual. Your board manual will vary depending on your school's governance structure.

Board Manual Checklist		
	Included	Not Applicable
General Information:		
History of school and current programs		
Mission and vision statement		
Charter		
State charter school law		
Bylaws		
Organizational chart		
Annual calendar with school events		
Board Information:		
Description of individual board member's responsibilities		
Committee job descriptions		
Current annual calendar of board and committee meetings		
Up-to-date list of board members' names, professional titles, addresses, and telephone numbers (identify offices and committee chairpersons)		
Description of board members' liability insurance		
Finance and fundraising		
Current financial statements and budget for the fiscal year		
Most recent audit report		
List of donors for the past two fiscal years		
Other Information:		
Annual report		
Selected press releases and articles		
Promotional material (brochures, etc.)		
List of resources (publications and organizations) related to charter schools		
Board and Committee Minutes:		
Most recent minutes		

7 From the National Center for Nonprofit Boards, *Governance FAQs*, www.ncnb.org/html/faq.html

Tool II: Bylaws Checklist (Examples of Bylaws)

	In Development	Developed	N/A
1. OFFICES			
2. PURPOSE			
3. MEMBERS			
3.1 Members			
3.2 Associates			
4. DIRECTORS			
4.1 General Powers			
4.2 Specific Powers			
4.3 Number, Election, and Term of Directors			
4.4 Resignation and Removal			
4.5 Vacancies			
4.6 Place of Meetings			
4.7 Annual Meetings			
4.8 Regular Meetings			
4.9 Special Meetings			
4.10 Retirements Applicable to Meetings			
4.11 Quorum and Voting			
4.12 Waiver of Notice			
4.13 Adjournment			
4.14 Rights of Inspection			
4.15 Fees and Compensation			
4.16 Restriction of Interested Directors			
4.17 Standard of Care			
5. OFFICERS			
5.1 Officers			
5.2 Election			
5.3 Subordinate Officers			
5.4 Removal			
5.5 Resignation			
5.6 Vacancies			
5.7 President/Chief Education Officer			
5.8 Vice Presidents			
5.9 Secretary			
5.10 Chief Financial Officer (Treasurer)			

	In Development	Developed	N/A
6. COMMITTEES			
6.1 Board Committees			
6.2 Meetings and Actions of Board Committees			
6.3 Executive Board			
6.4 Other Committees			
7. SELF-DEALING TRANSACTIONS			
7.1 Definition			
7.2 Action of the Board			
7.3 Interested Director's Vote			
7.4 Committee Approval			
7.6 Persons Liable and Extent of Liability			
7.7 Statute of Limitations			
7.8 Corporate Loans and Advances			
7.9 Annual Statement of Certain Transactions			
8. OTHER PROVISIONS			
8.1 Validity of Instrument			
8.2 Construction and Definitions			
8.3 Authority to Vote Securities			
8.4 Fiscal Year			
8.5 Conflict of Interest			
8.6 Interpretation of Charter			
9. INDEMNIFICATION OF AGENTS OF THE CORPORATION: PURCHASE OF LIABILITY INSURANCE			
9.1 Definitions			
9.2 Indemnification of Agents			
9.3 Purchase of Liability Insurance			
9.4 Nonapplicability to Fiduciaries of Employee			
10. AMENDMENTS			
10.1 Bylaws			

Tool III: References/Resources

Carver, J. (1990). *Boards that make a difference: A new design for leadership in nonprofit and public organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Carver, J., & Carver, M.M. (1997). *Reinventing your board: A step-by-step guide to implementing policy governance*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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Stoesz, E., & Raber, C. (1994). *Doing good better! How to be an effective board member of a nonprofit organization*. Intercourse, PA: Good Books.

Web Sites

National Center for Nonprofit Boards
Washington, DC
www.ncnb.org
Provides information board development and management.

Bylaws of Guajome Park Academy
Vista, CA
www.uscharterschools.org/res_dir/re_primary/res_articles.html
Provides a good example of bylaws.

Business Plan and Financial Management

The financial status and responsibilities of charter schools can vary widely both among and within states. In some states, charter schools are funded and manage their funds much as if they are a school district unto themselves. In other states, charter schools are a fiscal arm of an existing school district and have less financial autonomy.

Even small charter schools have large financial concerns. All schools need to develop a plan and process of managing their fiscal affairs. Fiscally independent schools in particular must be able to address the full range of fiscal management issues and processes.

Business Plan

What Is It?

- Management tool
- Fiscal reflection of the vision, mission, and design principles of a school
- Description of the costs involved in starting the charter school
- Projection of the school's future finances
- A reality check—it controls what the school can and cannot do

Importance of a Budget

Writing a business plan is useful for a number of reasons. It can be used to:

- Convince prospective funders that the school is a financially viable organization
- Obtain grants or loans
- Anticipate programmatic strengths and weaknesses
- Show how sensitive your projections are to changes in basic assumptions
- Ensure that funds are used as efficiently and effectively as possible

General Considerations in the Development of a Business Plan

1. School overview
   - The school's mission and instructional vision
   - The school's charter and relationship with the charter-granting agency
   - The facilities occupied by the school (or anticipated facilities needs if a specific facility has not been identified)

- The legal structure of the school (e.g., whether the school is an independent legal entity or is a legal arm of the charter-granting agency or some other agency or entity)

2. Student analysis

   - Total number of students served (or anticipated to be served) and their demographics (ages, grades, racial/ethnic composition, eligibility for free/reduced-price lunches, special needs status, language-minority status)
   - Planned enrollment and plans for future enrollment growth, including a candid analysis of why the projected enrollment or growth will actually materialize

3. Administrative management. This section should describe the school's governance and management structure, including:

   - A description of the school's legal structure and governing board members
   - A listing of the schools' administrative staff, their responsibilities, and their background and experience
   - An overview of the school's nonadministrative staff and key personnel policies
   - A description of the school's facilities and other major capital needs and resources
   - An overview of any major planned changes in enrollment, operations, facilities, or other factors, including a detailed start-up plan for new schools

4. Fiscal data (see Tool III for examples)

   - A balanced annual operations budget as shown in Appendix V, plus a three- to five-year budget projection.
   - A monthly cash flow statement showing that the school will be able to meet its monthly commitments, including payroll.
   - A balance sheet summarizing all assets and debts of the school at the start of the fiscal year.
   - Brief descriptions of all the major assumptions underlying the fiscal statements.

See Tool I: Business Plan Outline, Financial Statements, Sample Business Plan (Page 23)

Components of a Budget

Sources of Income

1. Per pupil revenue: Amount of money that the district in which a student resides spends on its own schools
2. Federal student entitlements:
   Title I reimbursement: Title I funds are a function of the number of low-income students in a local education agency (LEA). Charter schools are also eligible for other federal categorical grants, such as those for special education and bilingual education. Contact the U.S. Department of Education for more information about eligibility.
3. Grants and contributions: References for grants and contributions can be found online at www.pioneer.institute.org/csrc/grants.htm
4. Loans: Remember that if you borrow money, you will have to include debt service in your operating expenses
5. Student user fees for special activities like athletics or field trips
6. Other

Sources of Expenses

The expenses your charter school incurs will vary with the size, mission, and location of your school. Most expenses fall into one of the following broad categories:

1. Salaries and benefits
2. Services and activities (field trips, transportation costs)
3. Supplies and equipment
4. Marketing and development
5. Facilities (physical plant, custodial and maintenance, building expenses)
6. Loan repayments

Development of a Business Plan

Most business plans include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Start-up budget
- Operating budget for the first year
- Long-range budget for five years of operation

Start-Up Budget

Covers the preoperating period from the time the charter is approved to the opening of school for classes. The start-up budget could include initial planning and capital expenses necessary to bring the school to the point at which it is ready to open its doors to students.

See Tool II: Start-Up Worksheet (Page 28)

Operating Budget for the First Year of Operation

The operating budget reflects the yearly revenues and expenses of a charter school. In constructing an operating budget:

- Project operating costs in a manner similar to the start-up cost estimations
- Estimate revenues by using expected reimbursement and funding data, based on your projected enrollment and contributions

Long-Range Budget for Five Years of Operation

Largely because of high start-up costs and few economies of scale, charter schools may face a deficit in their early operating budgets. Eventually, however, your charter school should generate enough revenue from its operations to meet expenses. If this is not possible, cost-cutting and/or additional revenue generation will be necessary. A long-range budget helps to make this determination.

In constructing the long-range budget, follow these steps:

- Add any planned new expenditures
- Calculate figures for net annual operating costs and net current fund balances

Use your first-year operating budget; extrapolate to the next four years, noting the assumptions you make about inflation, enrollment growth, and so forth.

See Tool III: Sample Monthly Cash Flow (Page 30)
Tool IV-A: Sample Start-Up Budget (Page 33)
Tool IV-B: Operating Budget (Page 34)
Tool V-A,B: Proposed sample budget (Page 36)

Financial Management Policies, Practices, and Systems

A charter school that manages its own finances needs to establish a comprehensive financial management system. This system must address all aspects of fiscal management and must also be aligned and integrated with the school's legal, governance, and administrative structures. At a minimum, such a system will include the following elements:

- A comprehensive set of fiscal management policies, clarifying who has authority over the school's fiscal affairs, internal controls, accounting practices, purchasing, and personnel practices. These policies must be carefully aligned with the school's bylaws, governance structure, administrative staffing arrangements, and appropriate state and federal laws.
- A budget development calendar and budget monitoring system.
- An accounting system, usually consisting of a computer-based accounting package with a chart of accounts customized to the school's needs.
- A system of cutting payroll checks and ensuring that appropriate tax and retirement funds are withheld and forwarded to the appropriate agency.
- Banking arrangements.
- A contract auditor and audit process.

Establishing Financial Systems

There are at least three major paths a school can follow to accomplish the above tasks:

1. Perform financial management "in-house," by making these matters one of the responsibilities of the school director and/or staff.
2. Contract with an "outside" bookkeeper or accountant. There are many bookkeepers and accountants who might be willing, for a fee, to keep the school's books, prepare necessary reports, and cut payroll.
3. Contract with a school district or education finance service agency (e.g., a regional or county office of education or other public education-served entity capable of performing these services).

Financial Information

Charter schools are required to provide detailed financial information about their operation, primarily to demonstrate that public funds have been devoted to uses that are faithful to the public trust.

Charter schools may be faced with three main financial reporting requirements: annual report, pupil and financial end-of-year report, and year-end audit.

Annual Report

The annual report is a vehicle for conveying most, if not all, information by which a charter school is evaluated. An annual report may include:

- A financial statement consisting of the revenue and expenditures for the year just ended; income statement; a balance sheet setting forth the charter school's assets, liabilities, and fund balances; and a cash-flow statement describing the inflows and outflows of dollars
- Projections of income and expenses for the upcoming school year
- Discussion made toward the achievement of the goals of the charter
- Such other information as the board may require in guidelines

Pupil and Financial End-of-Year Report

The intent of the pupil performance report is to provide a multifaceted understanding of student performance at the charter school upon which the charter school's academic performance will be evaluated. Schools have the opportunity to voluntarily provide information on unique alternative assessments. The charter school's attendance rate and percentage of students transferring out of the school may also be included. Alongside this information, it is strongly rec-

ommended that the charter clearly outline the financial and operational relationship between the charter school and the sponsor district.

Year-End Audit

An audit should be conducted by a certified public accountant (CPA) for the proceeding state fiscal year following Generally Accepted Accounting Principles and those prescribed by federal rules. There currently exist no clear audit standards for charter schools. (Fortunately, the detailed and cumbersome state audit laws and state controllers auditing guidelines for school districts do not currently apply to many charter schools.)

See Tool VI: Financial Issues Checklist (Page 40)

Tool I: Business Plan Outline, Financial Statements, Sample Business Plan (Jefferson Academy)

While some charter school developers have demonstrated considerable skill in developing the "business side" of their schools, others may lack basic financial planning and management experience. This brief guide provides some simple, yet important, suggestions for those developing and operating charter schools who want to demonstrate that their school is on a strong fiscal footing. It shows how charter schools can begin to make the case that their school is a prime candidate for a loan or grant by answering the following fundamental questions:

- Is our school's current year operating budget in balance?
- Does our school have adequate cash and "working capital" resources to meet our monthly expenses such as payroll, rent, and benefit costs?
- Is our school's long-term fiscal picture in focus and in balance?
- Has our school demonstrated (or has the school's development team demonstrated) that it has the capacity to implement (or establish) sound financial management practices?

Charter schools that have developed such a business plan are in a strong position to make the case to prospective lenders or donors that their loan will be repaid in a timely manner or grant will achieve its stated purpose.

Guide for Developing a Basic Business Plan for Charter Schools

This guide may be used as a helpful tool when developing a business plan for the charter school. It not only may be used as a management tool for the school developers themselves, but may also be used when approaching the financial community while seeking traditional or nontraditional financing, or contributions and support.

Developed by the Charter Friends National Network
A Basic Business Plan for Charter Schools

The charter school business plan is a management tool. When developed and used properly, it is one of the most effective communication tools used to obtain grants or loans for your charter school, whether it comes from traditional lenders or the philanthropic community. It also can assist the school developer(s) in achieving his/her goals by identifying financial needs and/or problems early in the school planning process. The charter school business plan should reflect the school developers' ideas clearly and succinctly and/or could be a component of a larger schoolwide strategic plan that addresses the school's short- and long-term plans in more detail.

Before you start developing your business plan, you might ask yourself the following questions. Although some of these questions may seem too simple, they might be helpful to newer charter school developers. *Do not attempt to answer these questions as part of your written business plan.*

1. Have you worked in a school and/or educational setting similar to the one you want to start?
2. Have you had any business and/or education training in school?
3. Do you know how much money you will need to get the school started?
4. Have you decided on a marketing plan?
5. Have you talked with other school developers/operators about what they think of the school?
6. Can you determine the amount of money you should receive in terms of revenues per student?
7. Have you tried to find out how well schools similar to the one you want to open are doing in your community and in the rest of the country?
8. If you need to hire someone to help you, do you know where to look?
9. Do you know what benefits to provide?
10. Do you have a plan for training your employees?
11. Have you talked with the parents and schools (both public and private) in the area?
12. Have you determined the type of payment you intend to accept for student fees, and so forth?
13. Have you talked with an insurance agent about what kind of insurance you need?
14. Do you know what equipment and supplies you will need and how much they will cost?
15. Can you save money by buying secondhand equipment?
16. Have you compared the prices and credit terms of different suppliers?

Financial Statements To Include in Your Business Plan

When preparing projected financial statements for your charter school business plan you must start with basic assumptions for income and expenses. These assumptions for income and expenses should be detailed in your charter school business plan with supporting documentation derived from the market study and the market strategy. The projected financial statements should indicate financial changes in your revenue cycle. For instance, if your school receives fees and funds from the state during a specific time (e.g., quarterly), revenue during that period will be greater. Your financial projections should indicate the fluctuation in income and expenses.

There are four types of financial statements that should be included in your business plan:

1. Annual operating budget. The annual operating budget will take your income minus expenses and equal either a surplus or a deficit. The budget would show revenues by source (state aid, federal aid, grants, fees, etc.) and expenditure by object (salaries, benefits, rent, materials, books, services, professional training, utilities, insurance, etc.) for the first year of operations (or current fiscal year for a preexisting school).

2. Cash-flow statement. The cash-flow statement will show the cash generated and collected from school operations. This statement will utilize the same income and expense as the annual operating budget; however, it breaks down the information into monthly or quarterly columns showing whether the school will have enough money to pay its bills at the end of each month or quarter. Naturally, if the school's annual revenues arrive at the school later than its expenditures must be paid, the school will need "working capital" (e.g., a short-term loan) in order to pay its expenses on time.

3. Three- to five-year projections of income and expenses. A three- or five-year projection of anticipated income and expenses will show the planned growth, development, and needs of the school over time. Included in this kit are forms that may be used in the financial forecasting of your school. A rule of thumb when forecasting: "Be as conservative and as realistic as possible."

4. For those schools that are independent of their charter sponsor, an audited balance sheet of the most recent year, prepared by an external, certified public accountant (if the school has been open and audited after its first year). Schools that are in the planning stage, or the first year of operations, and do not yet have an annual audit report, should develop a set of financial management policies. These policies would specify who is responsible for preparing and monitoring the school's budget and how the "powers of the purse" are distributed within their school among board members, staff, and others.

Sample Business Plan Outline: Jefferson Academy

Suggested length: no more than three pages.

The questions outlined previously, along with the four financial statements described above, are instrumental in developing your charter school business plan. Once you have formulated answers to the questions and have developed the necessary financial statements, begin developing your charter school business plan.

It is encouraged that you develop the following components in your business plan. Traditional lenders and others who are requested to support your school over time will be impressed with such a plan.

I. **Summary**

A. School description

1. Name and address
2. School description (grade levels, etc.)
3. Mission statement
4. Instructional focus
5. Governance/administrative structure
   - Charter accountability (describe briefly how your school plans to remain viable at renewal)
   - Relationship with charter-granting agency

II. **Market Analysis**

A. Description of the area or market/district(s) that the school will serve

B. Target market/student population (what segment of district's population you plan to serve)

C. Competition—other school(s) seeking the same student population, to include private, public, magnet, parochial, and other charter schools

III. **Marketing Strategy**

A. Overall strategy (awareness for students and parents)

B. Specific admission and recruiting plans and policies

IV. **Management Plan**

A. Form of business organization (e.g., for-profit or nonprofit corporation)

B. Board of directors (owners, partners, or governing board)

C. Administrator(s): organization chart and responsibilities (if applicable)

D. Resumes of key personnel (omit if included with your application)

E. Staffing plan/number of employees

F. Facility plan/planned capital improvements (omit if included with your application)

G. Operating plan/schedule of work for next year

V. **Financial Data**

A. The appropriate financial statements described earlier. Your business plan will include at least the annual operating budget and the three- to five-year projections.

B. Explanations of assumptions underlying the budget and projections.

C. Explanation of use and impact of new funds (if seeking a loan or grant).

Tool II: Start-Up Worksheet

This activity is designed to assist you in clearly thinking through some of the expenses the school will incur in obtaining and preparing facilities, designing programs, hiring staff, and generally preparing for school operations. For purposes of this budgeting exercise, assume no tuition revenue is received from the state during the start-up phase. Careful development and analysis of start-up budgets minimizes start-up costs and avoids deficit spending.

1. Make a list of preoperating expenses and revenues.
2. Assign dollar amounts to each item on the list. If you are unsure about the cost of certain items, call vendors from whom you may buy these goods and services and ask for a quote.
3. You may wish to add an additional 10 percent to each quote as a contingency. This itemized list represents your start-up costs—the money you will need to open your school's doors.

Tool II: Start-Up Worksheet—continued

Charter School Start-Up Budget Worksheet—Expenses Before Year 1

	Average Monthly Amount	Months	Total
Operating Revenue Expenses			
Salaries and Benefits			
Teachers			
Administrators			
Support Staff			
Subtotal			
Services and Activities			
Custodial Services			
Telephone			
Subtotal			
Supplies and Equipment			
Furniture			
Computers			
Textbooks			
Subtotal			
Marketing and Development			
Printing			
Advertising			
Subtotal			
Physical Plant			
Renovations			
Rents			
Utilities			
Subtotal			
Total Expenses			
EXCESS (DEFICIT)			
Grants and Loans			
Government Start-Up Grant			
Private Grants			
Loans			
Total Grants and Loans			
ENDING FUND BALANCE			

Tool III: Sample Monthly Cash Flow

Hypothetical Charter School Monthly Cash Flow

REVENUES	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
State and local foundation aid		$ 106,909	$ 106,909	$ 106,909	$ 106,909
State categorical funding		8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909
Federal categorical funding		8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909
Grants and fundraising	65,000				
Total Revenues	$ 65,000	$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727
ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES					
Salaries					
Director	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417
Teachers			52,500	52,500	52,500
Instructional aides			15,400	15,400	15,400
Secretary	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
Benefits					
Retirement	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400
Health	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520
FICA	928	928	928	928	928
Other	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600
Books and Supplies					
Texts and instructional materials				17,500	17,500
Other books				10,500	10,500
Software				5,000	5,000
Classroom paper and supplies			2,800	2,800	2,800
Office supplies	200	200	200	200	200
Janitorial supplies			360	360	360
Services and Contracts					
Custodial			1,235	1,235	1,235
Bookkeeping & audit	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
Legal	667	667	667	667	667
Liability & property insurance		10,000			
Waste disposal	150	150	150	150	150
Student testing & assessment					3,500
Staff development					11,250
Special education consultant			5,600	5,600	5,600
Travel & conferences, board retreat					
Internet provider			864	864	864
Postage	120	120	120	120	120
Copier lease	250	250	250	250	250
Facilities and Capital					
Rent/lease/mortgage	30,940	15,470	15,470	15,470	15,470
Replace furnishings & equipment					
Gas/electric	450	450	450	450	450
Phone	200	200	200	200	200
Security alarm	100	100	100	100	100
Total Expenditures	$ 55,941	$ 50,471	$ 119,230	$ 152,230	$ 166,980
Monthly Surplus/(Deficit)	$ 9,059	$ 74,256	$ 5,497	$ (27,503)	$ (42,253)
Cash in Bank (Cash Deficit)	$ 9,059	$ 83,315	$ 88,812	$ 61,308	$ 19,055

Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	Apr.	May	June
$ 106,909	$ 106,909	$ 106,909	$ 106,909	$1,176,000	$ 106,909	$ 106,909
8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909
8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909	8,909
$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727	$ 124,727
$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417	$ 5,417
52,500	52,500	52,500	52,500	52,500	52,500	52,500
15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400	15,400
2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000	2,000
6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400	6,400
5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520	5,520
928	928	928	928	928	928	928
1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600
2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800
200	200	200	200	200	200	200
360	360	360	360	360	360	360
1,235	1,235	1,235	1,235	1,235	1,235	1,235
1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000	1,000
667	667	667	667	667	667	667
150	150	150	150	150	150	150
					3,500	
					11,250	
5,600	5,600	5,600	5,600	5,600	5,600	5,600
6,875					6,875	
864	864	864	864	864	864	864
120	120	120	120	120	120	120
250	250	250	250	250	250	250
15,470	15,470	15,470	15,470	15,470	15,470	15,470
14,000				14,000		
450	450	450	450	450	450	450
200	200	200	200	200	200	200
100	100	100	100	100	100	100
$ 140,105	$ 119,230	$ 119,230	$ 119,230	$ 133,230	$ 140,855	$ 103,760
$ (15,378)	$ 5,497	$ 5,497	$ 5,497	$ (8,503)	$ (16,128)	$ 20,967
$ 3,677	$ 9,174	$ 14,671	$ 20,168	$ 11,665	$ (4,463)	$ 16,504

Tool IV-A: "ABC" Charter School Start-Up Budget: Expenses Before Year 1

	Avg. Monthly Amount	Months	No.	Total
Operating Revenue				$0
Expenses				
Salaries and Benefits				
Teachers	$2,500	2	6	$30,000
Administrators	$3,000	4	1	$12,000
Support Staff	$1,000	4	1	$4,000
Subtotal				$46,000
Services and Activities				
Custodial Services	$500	4	N/A	$2,000
Telephone	$1,000	4	N/A	$4,000
Subtotal				$6,000
Supplies and Equipment				
Furniture	N/A	N/A	N/A	$2,000
Computers	N/A	N/A	2	$5,000
Textbooks	N/A	N/A	100	$2,000
Subtotal				$9,000
Marketing and Development				
Printing	N/A	N/A	N/A	$5,000
Advertising	N/A	N/A	N/A	$5,000
Subtotal				$10,000
Physical Plant				
Renovations	N/A	N/A	N/A	$25,000
Rent	$6,250	4	N/A	$25,000
Utilities	$2,000	4	N/A	$8,000
Subtotal				$58,000
Total Expenses				**($129,000)**
Excess (Deficit)				$129,000)
Grants and Loans				
Government Start-Up Grant				$50,000
Private Grants				$25,000
Loans				$55,000
Total Grants and Loans				$130,000
ENDING FUND BALANCE				**$1,000**

Tool IV-B: "ABC" Charter School Operating Budget: Year 1

Operating Revenue	Total	Assumptions/Notes
Per Pupil Revenue	$975,000	$6,500 per student (150 students)
Fees	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Student Entitlements	$75,000	$500 per student (150 students)
Total Revenue	$1,065,000	

Expenses	Total	Assumptions/Notes
Salaries and Benefits		
Salary—Teachers	$300,000	$40,000 per teacher (7.5 teachers)
Salary—Administrators	$67,500	$45,000 per administrator (1.5 administrators)
Salary—Support Staff	$37,500	$25,000 per support staff (1.5 support staff)
Salary—SPED/Bilingual Staff	$60,000	$40,000 per SPED/billing (1.5 SPED/billing)
Benefits—Health	$60,000	$5,000 per staff member (12 staff members)
Benefits—FICA	$34,875	7.5% of total salaries
Benefits—Workers' Comp	$9,300	2.0% of total salaries
Benefits—Medicare	$6,743	1.45% of total salaries
Staff Development	$6,000	$500 per staff member (12 staff members
Subtotal	$581,918	50.15% of total
Services and Activities		
Special Education/Guidance	$75,000	$500 per student (150 students)
Health	$22,500	$150 per student (150 students)
Custodial	$15,000	Flat fee
Transportation	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Media	$7,500	$50 per student (150 students)
Food	$30,000	$200 per student (150 students)
Accounting	$6,000	Flat fee
Insurance	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Telephone	$6,000	$500 per month
Postage and Shipping	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Physical Education and Extracurricular Activities	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Subtotal	$222,000	19.13% of total
Supplies and Equipment		
Supplies-Instructional	$45,000	$300 per student (150 students)
Supplies-Administrative	$3,000	$2,000 per administrator (1.5 administrators)
Supplies-General	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Computers	$30,000	$2,000 per student (10 students)
Furniture	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Athletic Equipment	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Other Equipment	$15,000	$100 per student (150 students)
Subtotal	$138,000	11.89% of total
Marketing and Development		
Printing	$2,500	Flat fee
Advertising	$5,000	Flat fee
Subtotal	$7,500	0.65% of total
Physical Utilities		
Rent	$175,000	$10 per square foot (17,500 square feet)
Utilities	$10,000	Flat fee
Maintenance and Repairs	$10,000	Flat fee
Renovations	$ -	
Subtotal	$195,000	16.80% of total

Loan Repayments		
Debt Service	$4,960	8% interest rate ($62,000 average debt)
Principal	$11,000	
Subtotal	$15,960	1.38% of total
Total Expenses	**$1,160,378**	
EXCESS (DEFICIT)	**($95,378)**	
Grants and Loans		
Government Grants	$25,000	
Private Grants	$50,000	
Loans	$25,000	
Total Grants and Loans	**$100,000**	
BEGINNING FUND BALANCE From Previous Year	$1,000	
ENDING FUND BALANCE = "Beginning Fund Balance" + "Excess (Deficit)" + "Grants and Loans"	$5,622	

Key Variables	
Number of students (FTE)	15
Number of teachers	7.5
Number of administrators	1.5
Number of support staff	1.5
Number of SPED/bilingual staff	1.5
Students per teacher	20
Students per administrator	100
Students per support staff	100
Students per SPED/bilingual staff	100
Salary: Teacher	$40,000
Salary: Administrator	$45,000
Salary: Support Staff	$25,000
Salary: SPED/bilingual staff	$40,000
Payment per student	$6,500
Fees per student	$100
Entitlements per student	$500
Total principal owed at beginning of fiscal year	$55,000

Notes

- No interscholastic sports
- No transportation to/from school

Charter School Average Budget*	
Per pupil revenue	$6,500
Salaries and Benefits	57.0%
Services and Activities	20.0%
Supplies and Equipment	7.5%
Physical Plant	15.0%
Debt Service	.5%

*Expenses based on 1997 annual reports of 14 charter schools

Tool V-A: Jefferson Academy Income, Expense, and Budget Statement

Income, Expense, and Budget Statement as Reflected by District
For Year Ending 1994-95 (Audited)

	Jun-95	Year End	%	94-95 Budget
Revenue				
PPOR Allocation	$45,644	$547,729	95.81%	$547,729
Special Education Reimbursement	11,089	11,089	1.94%	$10,000
Textbook Fees	0	5,728	1.00%	$4,500
Outdoor Lab Fees	870	2,052	0.36%	$0
Donations	0	3,651	0.64%	$3,000
Other Revenue	45	1,410	0.25%	$0
Total Revenues	$57,648	$571,659	100.00%	$565,229
Expenditures				
Salaries:				
Administration (2 FTE)	$4,510	$66,845	11.69%	$67,283
Special Education (1.2 FTE)	3,057	31,782	5.56%	33,500
Teachers (8 FTE)	17,421	176,968	30.96%	192,500
Educational Assistants (10 FTE)	5,887	54,081	9.46%	57,062
Custodian (1 FTE)	1,475	16,451	2.88%	20,000
Substitutes	1,770	4,328	0.76%	5,000
Total Salaries	$34,120	$350,455	61.30%	$375,345
Benefits:				
Special Education	1,332	8,119	1.42%	10,600
Staff	7,855	75,027	13.12%	80,505
Total Benefits	$9,187	$83,146	14.54%	$91,105
Purchased Services:				
Mileage/Travel	138	1,205	0.21%	550
Employee Training	681	5,152	0.90%	2,000
Outdoor Lab	0	72	0.01%	1,000
Printing	12	897	0.16%	1,000
Special Ed. Services	500	6,959	1.22%	4,000
Library/Film	1,310	1,975	0.35%	1,250
Maint./Equip. Repair	-601	1,613	0.28%	500
Telephone	415	2,940	0.51%	2,500
Postage	150	687	0.12%	750
Insurance (WC & UI)	1,958	10,715	1.87%	0
Total Purchased Services	$4,563	$32,215	5.64%	$13,550
Supplies/Materials				
Contingency	171	1,122	0.20%	18,000
Office Supplies	299	4,424	0.77%	3,000
Clinic	0	294	0.05%	500
Custodial Supplies	0	1,290	0.23%	1,500
Instructional	1,264	42,235	7.39%	42,000
Art	60	1,786	0.31%	0
PE Equipment	139	504	0.09%	0
Music	0	1,018	0.18%	0
Textbooks	3,589	22,276	3.90%	20,000
Copier	0	5,304	0.93%	3,000
Testing	836	3,467	0.61%	3,000
Awards/Graduation	67	1,120	0.20%	0
Total Supplies	$6,425	$84,840	14.84%	$91,000

	Jun-95	Year End	%	94-95 Budget
Capital Outlay:				
Office Equipment	2,557	11,639	2.04%	8,500
Instructional Equipment	1,261	26,525	4.64%	21,500
Total Capital Outlay	$3,818	38,164	6.68%	$30,000
Facility Costs:				
Natural Gas	0	1,883	0.33%	4,000
Electricity	0	4,540	0.79%	6,600
Water/Sanitation	0	2,380	0.42%	3,400
Total Facility Costs	$0	$8,803	1.54%	$14,000
PROGRAM TOTALS	$58,113	$597,623	104.54%	$615,000
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	($465)	($25,964)	-4.54%	($49,771)

Note 1: Reminder: $65,000 start-up allowance is reflected in the bottom line. The district has allowed a $43,000 loss in year one of operation, a cumulative loss of $21,000 at the end of year two, and no cumulative loss at the end of three years. Jefferson Academy is well ahead of target at the end of its first year in regards to this arrangement.

Note 2: Staff costs (salaries and benefits) were 80.25% of the budget. Special education costs were 8.54% of the budget. This was offset by a modest special education reimbursement of $11,089. This would reduce special education costs to 6.3% of the operating budget. Special education costs will increase significantly in year two of the operation.

Tool V-B: Jefferson Academy

Income, Expense, and Budget Statement as Reflected by District
For Year Ending, June 1996 (Audited)

	Jun-96	Year End	%	95-96 Budget	% Used
Revenue					
PPOR Allocation	$53,394	$656,904	89.92%	$656,904	100%
Special Education Reim	11,962	11,962	1.64%	12,000	100%
Textbook Fees	0	5,806	0.79%	5,000	116%
Outdoor Lab 96-97	0	1,759	0.24%	0	N/A
Outdoor Lab Fees	0	3,138	0.43%	3,250	97%
CDM Funds	0	700	0.10%	700	100%
At-Risk Funds	0	300	0.10%	300	100%
Technology Funds	0	2,075	0.28%	2,075	100%
Donations	0	7,760	1.06%	5,000	155%
Other Revenue	363	10,119	1.39%	750	1,349%
Payback Revenue	30,000	30,000			
Total Revenues	$95,719	$730,523	100.00%	$685,979	106%
Expenditures					
Salaries:					
Administration (2 FTE)	$4,007	$69,549	9.52%	$69,500	100%
Special Education (1.2 FTE)	3,179	40,076	5.49%	38,368	104%
Teachers (9 FTE)	20,406	232,849	31.87%	228,218	102%
Educational Assistants (10)	9,353	71,967	9.85%	71,500	101%
Custodian (1 FTE)	652	20,220	2.77%	21,000	96%
Substitutes	1,480	5,172	0.71%	5,000	103%
Total Salaries	$39,077	$439,833	60.21%	$433,586	101%
Benefits:					
Special Education	737	8,905	1.22%	9,000	99%
Staff	7,735	91,348	12.50%	96,800	94%
Total Benefits	$8,472	$100,253	13.72%	$105,800	95%
Purchased Services:					
Mileage/Travel	98	1,427	0.20%	1,000	143%
Employee Training	835	6,024	0.82%	3,000	201%
Outdoor Lab Fees	0	417	0.06%	3,250	13%
Printing	17	347	0.05%	1,000	35%
League Fees	0	1,000	0.14%	0	N/A
Special Ed. Services	3,071	8,614	1.18%	15,000	57%
Library/Film	4	2,396	0.33%	500	479%
Maint./Equip. Repair	2,588	5,813	0.80%	1,000	581%
Telephone	271	3,002	0.41%	1,500	200%
CDM Expenses	0	363	0.05%	700	52%
At-Risk Expenses	300	300	2.96%	300	100%
District Tech. Funds	0	1,890	0.26%	2,075	91%
Postage	193	1,172	0.16%	750	156%
Insurance (WC & UI)	0	4,947	0.68%	9,000	55%
Total Purchased Services	$7,377	$37,712	5.16%	$39,075	97%

	Jun-96	Year End	%	95-96 Budget	% Used
Supplies/Materials					
Contingency	0	0	0.00%	12,500	0%
Office Supplies	259	4,322	0.59%	3,500	123%
Clinic	199	455	0.06%	500	91%
Custodial Supplies	558	1,509	0.21%	2,500	60%
Instructional	-130	21,183	2.90%	20,000	106%
Art	28	2,002	0.27%	2,000	100%
PE Equipment	0	2,453	0.34%	2,000	123%
Music	19	2,012	0.28%	2,000	101%
Textbooks	64	11,377	1.56%	10,000	114%
Copier	539	8,906	1.22%	4,500	198%
Testing	0	2,991	0.41%	3,000	100%
Awards/Graduation	254	1,709	0.23%	750	228%
Total Supplies	$1,790	$58,919	8.07%	$63,250	93%
Capital Outlay:					
Office Equipment	0	3,454	0.47%	5,000	69%
Instructional Equipment	486	20,711	2.84%	20,000	104%
Total Capital Outlay	$486	$24,165	3.31%	$25,000	97%
Facility Costs:					
Natural Gas	1,481	3,444	1.48%	4,000	86%
Electricity	1,849	6,077	2.61%	6,600	92%
Water/Sanitation	204	2,127	0.91%	3,000	71%
Building Improvement	0	956	1.33%	0	N/A
Total Facility Costs	$3,534	$11,648	1.59%	$13,600	86%
PROGRAM TOTALS	$60,736	$672,530	92.06%	$680,311	99%
REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	$34,983	$57,993	7.94%	$5,668	

Note: Through two years of operation, Jefferson Academy has a positive income/expenses bottom line of $32,029.

Tool VI: Financial Issues Checklist

The checklist presented below summarizes many of the major financial issues and tasks identified previously that must be addressed by those starting a charter school in the period after a charter is granted, and before the school opens its doors to serve students. It is by no means comprehensive, but is instead intended to both illustrate the breadth and complexity of starting a school, and to stimulate thorough and thoughtful charter school development efforts. The checklist is reprinted from Premack, E. (1998) *The Charter School Development Guide*.

Financial Issues Checklist

FINANCE & OPERATIONS	Start Date	End Date	Lead Person	Coordinated Tasks	Budget Implications
Establish interim fiscal system					
Develop planning budget					
Develop & initiate fundraising plans					
Assess fiscal management options					
Establish budget development & oversight system					
Establish accounting system					
Develop internal controls & fiscal policies					
Establish payroll system					
Establish staff benefits					
Develop & monitor cash flow plan					
Establish banking arrangements					
Develop audit scope & bid					
Establish fiscal linkages					
Entitlement data collection & reporting					
Develop long-term fiscal plans					
Establish food services					
Establish transportation services					

Tool VII: References/Resources

Charter Friends National Network. (1998). *Guide for developing a basic business plan for charter schools*. St. Paul, MN: Hamline University, Center for Policy Studies. Retrieved May 30, 2000 from the World Wide Web: www.csus.edu/ier/charter/bizpl.html

Hassel, B., Miller, M., & Scharer, J. (1999). *Out of the box: Facilities financing ideas for charter schools*. St. Paul, MN: Hamline University, Center for Policy Studies, Charter School National Network. Retrieved June 3, 2000 from the World Wide Web: www.charterfriends.org/outofbox.html

Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center. (1997). Finances and budgeting. In *The Massachusetts charter school handbook* (3rd ed., pp. 45-58). Boston, MA: Pioneer Institute for Public Policy Research.

Premack, E. (1998). *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed.). Sacramento, CA: California State University, Institute for Education Reform, Charter Schools Development Center.

U.S. Charter Schools. (1999). *Budget, finance, and fundraising*. San Francisco, CA: WestEd, & Sacramento, CA: California State University, Charter Schools Development Center. Retrieved June 3, 2000 from the World Wide Web: www.uscharterschools.org/tech_assist/ta_finance.htm

Leadership Styles

Strong leadership is critical to the success of charter schools. Leadership will be needed in working with your core founding group as you develop your charter school. Leadership is also critical in working with your governing board, teachers, staff, parents, and volunteers. Remember to plan for the transition of power as your school grows and develops and leadership changes hands. Following are three descriptions of general leadership styles or approaches people use when working with others.

Authoritarian (Autocratic)

This type is used when the leader tells her group what she wants done and how she wants it done, without getting the advice of her people. Some of the appropriate conditions to use authoritarian leadership are when you have all the information to solve the problem, when you are short on time, and when your group is well motivated.

Some people think that this style includes yelling, using demeaning language, and leading by threats and abuse of power. This is not the authoritarian style; it is an abusive, unprofessional style of leadership.

However, if you have the time and you want to gain more commitment and motivation from your group members, then you should use the participative style.

Participative (Democratic)

This style involves the leader including one or more group members in determining what to do and how to do it. However, the leader maintains the final decisionmaking authority. This is not a sign of weakness; it is a sign of strength that your group will respect.

Participative leadership is normally used when you have some of the information, and your group members have some of the information. This allows them to become a team (rather than just a group) and allows you to make a better decision.

Delegative (Free Rein)

In this style, the leader allows the team (or individual) to make the decision. However, the leader is still responsible for the decisions that are made. This is used when a team is able to analyze the situation and determine what needs to be done and how to do it. You cannot do everything! You must set priorities and delegate certain tasks.

Which Style Is Best?

A good leader uses all three styles, and adapts depending on the specific relationship between the followers, the leader, and the situation. Some examples include:

- Using an authoritarian style with a new group member who is just learning the job. The leader is competent and a good coach. The individual is motivated to learn a new skill. The situation is a new environment for the individual in question.
- Using a participative style with team members who know their job. The leader knows the problem well, but he wants to create a team where the members take ownership of the project. The members know their jobs and want to become part of the team. The situation allows time for group development.
- Using a delegative style with a staff member who knows more about the job than you. You cannot do everything! The individual needs to take ownership of her job. Also, the situation might call for you to be at other places doing other things.
- Using all three. Telling your staff that a procedure is not working correctly and a new one must be established (authoritarian). Asking for their ideas and input on creating a new procedure (participative). Delegating tasks in order to implement the new procedure (delegative).

Forces that influence the style to be used include a number of factors, such as:

- How much time is available?
- Are relationships based on respect and trust or on disrespect?
- Who has the information? You, your employees, or both?
- How well your employees are trained and how well you know the task.
- Internal conflicts.
- Stress levels.
- Type of task. Is it structured, unstructured, complicated, or simple?

"To lead people, walk beside them...

As for the best leaders, the people
do not notice their existence.

The next best, the people
honor and praise.

The next, the people fear;

And the next, the people hate...

When the best leader's work is done,
the people say,

'We did it ourselves!'"

—*Lao-tsu*

Which style of leadership do you tend to use?

See Tool I: Leadership Style Survey (Page 48) for more information.

See Tool II: Leadership Self-Assessment (Page 52) to assess your feelings about leading others.

A New Way of Looking at Leadership: Facilitative Leadership

Facilitative leadership has been defined as "the behaviors that enhance the collective ability of a school to adapt, solve problems, and improve performance."[1] Facilitative leadership uses a set of strategies to inspire employees to look beyond self-interest and focus on organizational goals.

Facilitative leaders:

- Share and communicate an inspiring vision
- Focus on results, process, and relationships
- Seek maximum appropriate involvement of all appropriate people
- Model behaviors that facilitate collaboration
- Design pathways to action
- Bring out the best in others
- Celebrate accomplishments

See Tool III: Personal Assessment: The Seven Practices of Facilitative Leadership (Page 54) for more details on the seven practices of facilitative leadership and to assess your use of these practices as a leader.

1 From Conley, D.T., & Goldman, P. (1994). Facilitative leadership: How principals lead without dominating [Special issue]. *OSSCBulletin, 37*(9).

Working as a Team

Why are we including a section on group/team dynamics? The difference between being a "group" and being a "team" lies in the ability to accomplish goals most effectively. Moving from a group to a team involves four basic stages of development[2]: forming, conforming, storming, and performing. Understanding and recognizing each stage can assist in reaching the most desirable stage for your team: performing. Each stage of team development has key characteristics. Suggestions follow for facilitating or mediating each stage.

1. Forming
    - Group members are a bit uncertain.
    - Members wonder, "What are our goals?"
    - Time to establish purpose, procedures.
    - Members get to know each other in a new context.
    - *Suggestion:* Clarify goals, share information, model good communication and openness among members. Modeling of strong leadership skills is important.
2. Conforming
    - Members ask, "What is my role?"
    - Commitment levels get established.
    - Members begin to feel unity (sometimes with too much cooperation and agreement that can lead to conformity and stale ideas).
    - Possibilities are explored.
    - *Suggestion:* Help team members define roles and key strengths of the group.

2 From Whetten, D., & Cameron, K. (1995). *Developing management skills* (3rd. ed.).

3. Storming

   - Disagreements begin to arise.
   - Some members challenge expectations.
   - There is polarization of members (two or more "camps").
   - Defensiveness increases.
   - Key issues are explored more in depth.
   - Members do not focus on their strengths.
   - *Suggestion:* Refocus the group on the task; set up win-win situation for all team members.

Though this stage may seem unpleasant for some members, it actually helps push at the boundaries of thinking. Disagreement can be turned into a healthy dialogue of different ideas and create innovative solutions.

4. Performing

   - Trust level is high.
   - This is a working team, not just a group.
   - Support and interdependence is high among members.
   - Team makes the most of its members' strengths.
   - Team is completing tasks, solving problems, working "with the system."
   - Speed and creativity are enhanced.
   - *Suggestion:* Provide regular feedback on accomplishments; assist in avoiding digressing to earlier stages by maintaining open communication. Celebrate accomplishments.

5. Reforming—Occurs when:

   - Goals/tasks are achieved.
   - The team partially disbands for any reason.
   - The time comes to create new goals or redefine old ones.
   - New members join the group/team.
   - *Suggestion:* Establish goals, share information, exemplify good communication and openness among members.

Again, awareness of the stages can assist teams in reaching the most desirable stage: performing. Figure 1 shows the cyclical nature of this process.

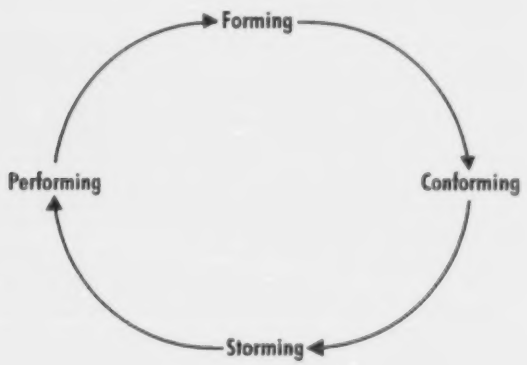

Figure 1. Team Development Cycle

Depending on the adeptness of the team facilitator or mediator, each stage can last varying amounts of time. The stages do not necessarily sequence in the order shown in the cycle. Movement can digress from performing back to storming, for example, because of stress or unreasonable pressure to accomplish a difficult goal.

Leadership Toolbox:
See Tool IV: Effective Delegation (Page 57)
Tool V: More Effective E-Mail (Page 60)
Tool VI: Time Management (Page 61)
Tool VII: Conducting Effective Meetings (Page 64)
Tool VIII: References/Resources (Page 68)

Tool I: Leadership Style Survey

This informal tool is designed to help you think about the different leadership styles and the style you use most often when working with employees or team members.

Directions This questionnaire contains statements about leadership style beliefs. Next to each statement, circle the number that represents how strongly you feel about the statement by using the following scoring system:

- Almost always true 5
- Frequently true 4
- Occasionally true 3
- Seldom true 2
- Almost never true 1

Be honest about your choices as there are no right or wrong answers—it is only for your own self-assessment.

	Almost Always True	Frequently True	Occasionally True	Seldom True	Almost Never True
1. I always retain the final decisionmaking authority within my team.	5	4	3	2	1
2. I always try to include one or more team members in determining what to do and how to do it. However, I maintain the final decision-making authority.	5	4	3	2	1
3. My team and I always vote whenever a major decision has to be made.	5	4	3	2	1
4. I do not consider suggestions made by my team members, as I do not have the time for them.	5	4	3	2	1
5. I ask for ideas and input on upcoming plans and projects from team members.	5	4	3	2	1
6. For a major decision to pass, it must have the approval of each individual or the majority.	5	4	3	2	1
7. I tell my team what has to be done and how to do it.	5	4	3	2	1

	Almost Always True	Frequently True	Occasionally True	Seldom True	Almost Never True
8. When things go wrong and I need to create a strategy to keep a project or process running on schedule, I call a meeting to get my team's advice.	5	4	3	2	1
9. To get information out, I send it by e-mail, memos, or voice mail; very rarely is a meeting called. My team members are then expected to act upon the information.	5	4	3	2	1
10. When someone makes a mistake, I tell him or her not to ever do that again and make a note of it.	5	4	3	2	1
11. I want to create an environment where the team takes ownership of the project. I allow them to participate in the decisionmaking process.	5	4	3	2	1
12. I allow my team to determine what needs to be done and how to do it.	5	4	3	2	1
13. New hires are not allowed to make any decisions unless I approve it first.	5	4	3	2	1
14. I ask team members for their vision of where they see their jobs going and then use their vision where appropriate.	5	4	3	2	1
15. My team members know more about their jobs than I do, so I allow them to carry out the decisions to do their job.	5	4	3	2	1
16. When something goes wrong, I tell my team that a procedure is not working correctly, and I establish a new one.	5	4	3	2	1
17. I allow my team to set priorities with my guidance.	5	4	3	2	1
18. I delegate tasks in order to implement a new procedure or process.	5	4	3	2	1
19. I closely monitor my team to ensure they are performing correctly.	5	4	3	2	1
20. When there are differences in role expectations, I work with them to resolve the differences.	5	4	3	2	1
21. Each individual is responsible for defining his or her job.	5	4	3	2	1
22. I like the power that my leadership position holds over subordinates.	5	4	3	2	1
23. I like to use my leadership power to help subordinates grow.	5	4	3	2	1
24. I like to share my power with my subordinates.	5	4	3	2	1
25. Team members must be directed or threatened with punishment in order to get them to achieve the organizational objectives.	5	4	3	2	1

	Almost Always True	Frequently True	Occasionally True	Seldom True	Almost Never True
26. The team will exercise self-direction if members are committed to the objectives.	5	4	3	2	1
27. The team members will have the right to determine their own organizational objectives.	5	4	3	2	1
28. Team members seek mainly security.	5	4	3	2	1
29. The team knows how to use creativity and ingenuity to solve organizational problems.	5	4	3	2	1
30. My team can lead itself just as well as I can.	5	4	3	2	1

Scoring In the fill-in lines below, mark the score of each item on the questionnaire. For example, if you scored item one with a 3 (occasionally), then enter a 3 next to Item 1. When you have entered all the scores for each question, total each of the three columns.

Item	Score	Item	Score	Item	Score
1	_____	2	_____	3	_____
4	_____	5	_____	6	_____
7	_____	8	_____	9	_____
10	_____	11	_____	12	_____
13	_____	14	_____	15	_____
16	_____	17	_____	18	_____
19	_____	20	_____	21	_____
22	_____	23	_____	24	_____
25	_____	26	_____	27	_____
28	_____	29	_____	30	_____
TOTAL	_____	TOTAL	_____	TOTAL	_____
Authoritarian (Autocratic)		Participative (Democratic)		Delegative (Free Reign)	

This questionnaire is to help you assess the leadership style under which you normally operate. The lowest score possible for a stage is 10 (almost never) while the highest score possible for a stage is 50 (almost always).

The highest of the three scores indicates which style of leadership you normally use. If your highest score is 40 or more, it is a strong indicator of your normal style.

The lowest of the three scores is an indicator of the style you least use. If your lowest score is 20 or less, it is a strong indicator that you normally do not operate out of this mode.

If two of the scores are close to the same, you might be going through a transition phase, either personally or at work, except:

> If you score high in both the participative and the delegative, then you are probably a delegative leader.
>
> If there is only a small difference between the three scores, this indicates that you have no clear perception of the mode under which you operate, or you are a new leader and are trying to feel out the correct style for you.

Normally, some of the best leaders operate out of the participative mode and use the other two modes as needed. The exception would be a leader who has a new crew or temporary work force. That leader would probably be operating out of the authoritarian mode. On the other side, a leader who has a crew of professionals or a crew that knows more than she or he does would probably operate out of the delegative mode.

Leaders who want their employees to grow use a participative style of leadership. As they "grow" into their jobs, then they are gradually given more authority (delegative) over their jobs.

Tool II: Leadership Self-Assessment

By Donald Clark, copyright 1998, revised 1999

This informal self-survey will provide you with feedback as to your feelings about leading others. Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being a definite YES and 1 being a definite NO. Be honest about your answers as this survey is only for your own self-assessment.

Circle the number that you feel most closely represents your feelings about the task.

	NO				YES	
1.	1	2	3	4	5	I enjoy working on teams.
2.	1	2	3	4	5	I am able to speak clearly to others.
3.	1	2	3	4	5	I enjoy relating to others on an interpersonal basis.
4.	1	2	3	4	5	I am good at planning.
5.	1	2	3	4	5	I can interpret rules and regulations.
6.	1	2	3	4	5	I feel comfortable asking others for advice.
7.	1	2	3	4	5	I enjoy collecting and analyzing data.
8.	1	2	3	4	5	I am good at solving problems.
9.	1	2	3	4	5	I am comfortable writing memos to others.
10.	1	2	3	4	5	I can delegate work to others.
11.	1	2	3	4	5	I am effective at handling employee complaints.
12.	1	2	3	4	5	Giving directions is comfortable for me.
13.	1	2	3	4	5	I know how to develop goals and carry them out.
14.	1	2	3	4	5	I am comfortable with implementing new techniques.
15.	1	2	3	4	5	I enjoy appraising others' performance and giving feedback.
16.	1	2	3	4	5	If I made a mistake, I would admit it and correct it.
17.	1	2	3	4	5	I am able to resolve conflict in the workplace.
18.	1	2	3	4	5	I believe in diversity in the workplace.
19.	1	2	3	4	5	I thrive on change.
20.	1	2	3	4	5	One of my greatest desires is to become a leader.

Score the survey by adding the numbers that you circled: _____ My score

A score of 50 or higher indicates a desire to become a leader and a perceived ability to perform the tasks required of a leader.

A score of 50 or less indicates a general dislike of wanting to become a leader or a perceived inability to perform the tasks required of a leader.

BUT, no matter what your score is, your commitment, desire, and determination are the biggest indicators of your ability to become a leader.

Use this assessment to help you determine what skills and abilities you can continue to improve (strengths) and what skills and abilities you need to develop (opportunities for growth).

What are your strengths?

What are your opportunities for growth?

Tool III: Personal Assessment: The Seven Practices of Facilitative Leadership

Share an Inspiring Vision

Facilitative leaders create and communicate an inspiring image of the future and enroll others in its pursuit.

Skills:

- Deliver effective presentations
- Create vision

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Focus on Process, Results, and Relationships

Facilitative leaders achieve success by consciously balancing results, process, and relationships.

Skills:

- Evaluate success in each of three dimensions
- Make conscious choices to refocus attention when needed

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Seek Maximum Appropriate Involvement

Facilitative leaders increase involvement without losing control by seeking the maximum involvement appropriate to the situation.

Skills:

- Identify key stakeholders
- Involve stakeholders in the decisionmaking process
- Determine the appropriate decisionmaking process

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Model Behaviors that Facilitate Collaboration

Facilitative leaders create a safe environment for participation by modeling collaborative behaviors.

Skills:

- Share power of decisionmaking
- Highlight potential for success
- Actively encourage others to contribute
- Adjust plans to meet changing needs
- Accept others' ideas, perceptions, and feedback in a nondefensive way

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Design Pathways to Action

Facilitative leaders help build clear processes for realizing opportunities and solving problems.

Skills:

- Define where we want to go (goal)
- Define where we are (current work issue)
- Define how we are going to get there (process)

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Bring Out the Best in Others

Facilitative leaders develop relationships based on trust and respect to build environments where people learn and grow.

Skills:

- Listen as an ally
- Observe to give honest feedback at appropriate times
- Facilitate the success of others

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Celebrate Accomplishment

Facilitative leaders build people's pride, self-esteem, and commitment to their work by celebrating achievements and participation.

Skills:

- Recognize achievement
- Acknowledge people for their contribution
- Appreciate the different values that different people bring

What are some examples of how you have used this practice?

What area do you need to work on?

Tool IV: Effective Delegation

One of the primary responsibilities of a leader is to delegate responsibility. This is true whether you are working with staff, volunteers, or parents. When delegating tasks, include the following elements in the act of delegation.

A. Giving the Assignment in Terms of Results

Define the tasks in terms of what is to be accomplished, not just activities.

- In order for people to feel they are accomplishing something, they need to have a sense of what they are trying to achieve. Leaders therefore define jobs as something to accomplish (such as raise money or make people feel welcome) rather than something to do (write a grant proposal or offer reception services).
- Explain as precisely as possible what it is you wish to have done and when.
- Define and explain the objective—the results to be achieved. Be specific. Do not say: "Think about it this week"; instead say: "Bring me three alternate solutions by 10 a.m. next Monday."
- Plans often contain goals such as, "Conduct two spelling lessons per day."
- Make absolutely certain that your associate fully understands the task. (The time you spend instructing at this early stage will prevent mistakes and misunderstandings further on.)
- Explain the importance of the particular task.
- Show them that you have confidence in their ability to carry out the task. Be interested only in results, not the details of *how* it is done.
- Be certain that the person you choose is capable of solving the problem, including having the necessary knowledge and training to do it.

B. Defining the Level of Control

Inform the person to whom you delegate how much authority he or she has in making decisions.

- Delegate authority to make decisions along with the responsibility for carrying out the task.
- If a person does only what he or she is told to do, the satisfaction of achieving a result is reduced. It can also lead to resistance. Leaders therefore give people the authority to plan and evaluate what they do. If there is reason to worry about a specific effort, the leader gives the person the authority to recommend a plan. In cases where a team of

people is pursuing a result, the team is responsible for creating a plan and for meeting periodically to evaluate how they are doing.

- Expect completed work from your associates. Never take work back. Do not accept problems from them, but rather expect alternative solutions and a recommendation. Otherwise, you will soon discover that you have become the victim of reverse delegation. If they come to you for help, do not offer opinion, but ask: "What do you think is the best way to handle it?"

C. Communicating Any Guidelines

Alerting the delegatee any parameters that must shape their decisions.

- Know the workload of your associates and help them to set priorities. Be reasonable, but apply a little pressure. Remember Parkinson's Law: "Work expands to fill the available time."
- Always establish deadlines. Ideally, your associates should set their own deadlines. When working on large projects of long duration, deadlines should be established as you go.

D. Making Resources Available

Giving the delegatee assistance necessary to accomplish the task.

- Be aware of the types of support your associates may need.
- Link the person you delegate to with people who may be of assistance to them in their project.
- Be sure the person you delegate to has access to the proper tools to do the job.

E. Determining Criteria for Success

Reach agreement on how results will be judged.

- If a person cannot tell that what he or she is doing is working out well, there is no point trying very hard. There is certainly no point in doing anything different than what you are doing. To get full satisfaction from the work, a person needs to get some feedback that indicates the degree of success he or she is having.
- Without a means of knowing whether we are succeeding, there is no point in pursuing goals. Failure to determine if we are winning or losing and further failure to check makes the whole planning process a waste of time.

Establishing reporting points.

F. Setting Up Checkpoints

- If managers do not set deadlines for accomplishing results or do not set regular checkpoints for review of progress, employees tend to assume that management is not serious about the particular goals and tend to get bogged down in details of the daily routine.
- Tell your associates when you intend to follow up—and then do it! Set up checkpoints and a system for reporting exceptions.
- Remember that intelligent people learn from their mistakes! Review what went wrong, and how to avoid it next time—not who did it.

Delegation Summary

1. Decide who is the best candidate for the job.
2. Have a clear dialogue and discussion about what is expected.
3. Ask for a commitment.
4. Provide training support, if necessary.
5. Be prepared to reward excellence.
6. Be prepared to give full support in the clinches.
7. Do not accept upward delegation.
8. Review: Have I delegated the "urgent" items and kept the "important" ones for myself?

   Have I delegated opportunities more than I have problems?

Tool V: More Effective E-Mail[3]

- Check a maximum of once or twice per day at a set time for a maximum of X minutes.
- When you receive e-mail, answer immediately all e-mail in order of importance. When you run out of time, look at the remaining messages and determine if they warrant more time or if your other "to do's" are more important.
- Keep responses as brief as possible.
- Get off all e-mail junk mail! Unsubscribe to listservs that you don't read at least one time per week.
- Determine those individuals who constantly send you "unimportant" information and ask them to be more selective in what they send to you.
- Are you being "copied" on information that is not of value to you? Speak to the writer of these messages.
- Delete as many incoming messages as possible, once read. Even better, delete as many as possible before you read them.
- If someone asks for a lot of information via e-mail, respond to them to call you at a specific time. This will save you typing time and put the responsibility on them to record the information.
- Move read messages to topic folders to keep your in-box clear.

3 Gloria Gault Geary, CSP, www.forleaders.com/forleaders/moretem.html

Tool VI: Time Management

Steven R. Covey's Time Management Matrix[4]

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	**I ACTIVITIES** • Crises • Pressing problems • Deadline-driven projects	**II ACTIVITIES** • Preparation • Crisis prevention • Values clarification • Planning • Relationship building • True recreation
Not Important	**III ACTIVITIES** • Interruptions, some phone calls • Mail, some reports • Some meetings • Many proximate, pressing matters • Many popular activities	**IV ACTIVITIES** • Trivia, busy work • Some mail • Some phone calls • Time wasters • Many pleasant activities

Basically, we spend our time in one of four ways, as illustrated in the time management matrix above. This matrix defines activities as "urgent" or "not urgent" and "important" or "not important." With careful analysis, most people discover that they spend far too much time responding to the urgent crises of Quadrants I and III, escaping occasionally for survival to the nonurgent, unimportant time wasters of Quadrant IV.

Most time management tools focus on prioritizing and accomplishing Quadrant I and III "urgent" activities, but research indicates that effective people don't just do things differently; they do different things.

Focusing on the "important" but "not urgent" activities of Quadrant II makes the vital difference in personal and organizational effectiveness. Unfortunately,

4 Covey, S.R. (1989). *The seven habits of highly effective people: Restoring the character ethic*

because they are vitally "important" but are not "urgent," these activities often don't get done.

The following are examples of some of the biggest time wasters that keep you in Quadrants I and III:

- Indecision—Think about it, worry about it, put it off, think about it, worry about it, and so forth.
- Inefficiency—Jumping in and implementing instead analyzing and designing first
- Unanticipated interruptions that do not pay off
- Procrastination—Failing to get things done when they need to be done
- Unrealistic time estimates
- Unnecessary errors—You do not have enough time to do it right, but you have enough time to do it over!
- Crisis management
- Poor organization
- Ineffective meetings
- Micro-management
- Doing urgent rather than important tasks
- Poor planning and lack of contingency plans
- Failure to delegate or delegation of responsibility without authority
- Lack of priorities, standards, policies, and procedures

The following are examples of time savers that will allow you to work in Quadrant II:

- Manage the decisionmaking process, not decisions
- Concentrate on doing only one task at a time
- Establish daily, short-term, mid-term, and long-term priorities
- Handle correspondence expeditiously with quick, short letters and memos
- Throw unneeded things away

- Establish personal deadlines and ones for the school
- Do not waste other people's time
- Ensure all meetings have a purpose, have a time limit, and include only essential people
- Get rid of busywork; streamline operations to do this
- Maintain accurate calendars; abide by them
- Know when to stop a task, policy, or procedure
- Delegate everything possible and empower others
- Keep things simple
- Ensure time is set aside to accomplish high-priority tasks
- Set aside time for reflection
- Use checklists and to-do lists
- Adjust priorities as a result of new tasks

Tool VII: Conducting Effective Meetings

Listed below are some guidelines for conducting effective meetings:

Purpose

- Determine if a different activity could be used besides a meeting. A lot of wasted meetings are called when a couple of phone calls, e-mail, or one-on-ones would have worked better.
- Define the objectives and desired outcomes. Know what you are trying to achieve by having a meeting.

Participants

- Be sure to have all necessary people notified of the meeting
- Deliver an agenda in advance if possible, so that the participants have time to plan

Planning

- Create an agenda that is carefully scripted:
  - — Give start and stop times
  - — Identify the place of the meeting
  - — List participants and guests
  - — List what the participants' roles are and what is expected from them; this will allow them to gather all the relevant data they need to bring to the meeting
  - — Approximately two-thirds of the meeting should be focused on current agenda items; the remaining time should be subdivided into two-sixths: one-sixth on past agenda items and follow-up, one-sixth on future agenda items.
  - — The agenda should be posted at the meeting in view of all participants

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- Sample agenda format:

Group Name:

Date:

Time:

Location:

Participants and Roles (if determined):

Desired Outcomes: (Products from the meeting will be ...)

-
-
-

What (Items to be discussed)	How Method (Presentation, discussion, brainstorm, etc.)	Who Facilitator, group	Time Min.

Assign a Note Taker (Minutes)

- Who attended
- What problems were discussed
- Key decisions reached
- Next steps (action items):
  - — Specific task to be accomplished.
  - — When the task should be completed or an update on progress provided.
  - — Who is responsible for completing this task. How will progress be evaluated?
  - — Resources needed to complete this task.

Start the Meeting

- Communicate the purpose and desired outcomes to all participants
- Clarify the type of participation and interaction desired
- Set the ground rules (norms), such as:
  - — When the meeting will stop and end
  - — How each member will be heard
  - — How conflict will be resolved
  - — What is expected of each member
  - — Confidential topics
  - — Show that you value their ideas, opinions, and questions

Conduct the Meeting

- Take time to tell and hear stories. Be creative in how you share them.
- Clarify and paraphrase key ideas.
- Ask for different points of view; protect new ideas.
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage their input.
- Keep the focus on ideas, not on people.
- Assign next steps throughout the meeting. Make all next steps specific assignments.
- Stay focused on the agenda topics. Don't wander off topic or become distracted. Agendas are worth taking seriously, but do not stifle creativity or insult participants who stray.

Closing

- Help the group decide on next steps.
- Review assigned next steps. Ensure each person knows his or her duties to perform. Make sure everyone goes from "meeting" to "doing."
- Conclude by summarizing the group's accomplishments.
- Thank group members sincerely for their participation and contributions.

- Evaluate the meeting. What worked? What needs improvement?
- Plan post-meeting logistics.
- Using the minutes and your impressions, create a document that clearly describes the meeting. Use comments, questions, criticisms, and insights to enhance the quality of the document.
- Distribute the document to all participants and other key players within the organization.
- Monitor progress on next steps.

Follow Up (Action Items)

Tool VIII: References/Resources

Bolman, L.G., & Deal, T.E. (1997). *Leadership and organizational vitality* [Working paper]. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Blue Ribbon Schools Program.

Chrislip, D.D., & Larson, C.E. (1994). *Collaborative leadership: How citizens and civic leaders can make a difference*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Covey, S.R. (1989). *The seven habits of highly effective people: Restoring the character ethic*. New York, NY: Simon & Schuster.

Covey, S.R. (1991). *Principle-centered leadership*. New York, NY: Summit Books.

Ramsey, R.D. (1999). *Lead, follow, or get out of the way: How to be a more effective leader in today's schools*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Smith, S.C., & Piele, P.K. (Eds.).(1997). *School leadership: Handbook for excellence* (3rd ed.). Eugene, OR: University of Oregon, ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 401 596)

Web Sites

Big Dog's Leadership Link Page
Don Clark, Lynnwood, WA
www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadlnk.html

The Emerging Leader
Columbus, OH
www.emergingleader.com/aboutus.htm
The purpose of this site is to promote effective, productive and dynamic leadership practices and to provide a place to develop skills and learn from others.

For Leaders
Gaffney, SC
www.ForLeaders.com/
Provides resources for leaders.

LeadSimm
San Diego, CA
www.leadsimm.com
Information on collaborative leadership.

Personnel Issues

There are several important reasons to have clearly written personnel policies and to present them to all employees. Policies are often a matter of federal and/or state law[1]. Good policies are not only in the interests of the employees themselves, but also in the interest of the organization as a whole. Policy establishes expectations and shapes culture; thus, implications of policy must be carefully considered before implementation. Without established procedures and consistency of their application, an organization may find itself embroiled in a lengthy legal investigation in the event of a dispute. By taking the time to properly implement policies and procedures and educate employees, you will minimize one more barrier to the success of your charter school.

Due to rapidly changing employment law, it is recommended that the school seek legal counsel (with specialization in employment law). This is advised not only during initial drafting of policy, but during the annual revision and updating process as well.

A checklist for personnel issues follows in Tool VIII of this section (Page 94).

Resources can be found in Tool IX (Page 95).

In this section, you will find information on employee selection practices, terms of employment, compensation and benefits, staff development and continuing education, code of conduct, grievance procedures, and others. Federal and state laws influence many procedures regarding personnel issues; charter schools are not exempt from federal laws.

1 In the case of differing or conflicting laws, the more beneficial (in terms of the employee) of the two laws is to be followed. Although the federal law is what rules, state laws may cover and/or require more than the federal law. Refer to your state and charter laws whenever legal requirements are involved.

Employee Selection Practices

During the selection process, be extremely candid about the school you are running—vision, culture, educational philosophy, mission, curriculum compatibility. It is essential that both you and potential employees agree with the basic principles on which your school is based.

Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)

The concept of EEO stems from the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states that all applicants/employees must, by law, be given equal opportunity regardless of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, and age.

- Title VII of the Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination in the workplace on the basis of race, religion, color, creed, national origin, gender, and age (40 and up at the federal level; individual states vary). The Act applies to the employee selection and termination process as well.
- Americans with Disabilities Act
  - — Prohibits employment discrimination on the basis of disability.
  - — "Reasonable accommodation" must be made on behalf of an employee with a physical disability.
  - — ADA prohibits any inquiry during an interview that is likely to lead to information about an impairment or disability, or the need for accommodation thereof, prior to offering an applicant a position. However, you may inquire about an applicant's ability to perform specific essential (though not marginal) job functions (e.g., lifting up to 50 pounds).

Title VII and the ADA cover all private employers, state and local governments, and education institutions that employ 15 or more individuals. Check your state's laws for amendments to the federal coverage (many states require coverage for organizations with fewer than 15 employees).

Employment of Relatives

Relatives of school employees are to be given the same consideration as other applicants for a job opening. It is advisable to avoid permitting related employees to work in the same department.

Certification Requirements

Charter laws vary from state to state on this issue. Check your state's law.

Recruitment of Teachers

Recruiting and retaining qualified, competent teachers is an ongoing problem nationwide. Efforts have been made to meet the need for high-quality teachers through numerous recruitment programs. At the national level, Title II of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998 provides new opportunities to invest in the recruitment, preparation, licensing, and support of teachers. Teacher recruitment grants help support the efforts of states and school-university partnerships to reduce shortages of qualified teachers in high-need areas.

As the literature suggests, both urban and rural areas can be identified as "high-need" areas.

> Generally, inner-city schools find it most difficult to attract teachers, while suburban school districts have less trouble. The urban areas tend to have difficulty recruiting teachers because of high crime and poverty rates, unfavorable pupil-teacher ratios, lower pay and overcrowded conditions.[2]

Reasons for high teacher turnover in small, rural schools include:

- Preservice preparation inappropriate for small, rural schools
- Failure to recognize that experience in small schools can advance career plans and goals
- Inadequate experiential and psychological preparation for the demands
- Mismatch of personal value systems and rural lifestyles
- Discontinuity between idyllic expectations and harsh realities of rural living

Tips and Strategies for Recruitment

Recruitment strategies can be difficult at times, depending on a school's resources. The strategies provided are not comprehensive, although they do address specific urban and rural issues that affect a number of districts nationwide. Also, keep in mind that what works for one district may not work in another. Some districts may benefit from strategies identified for both urban and rural areas.

Administrators of urban and small, rural schools "should analyze school and community needs, plan an annual recruitment calendar, and prepare a recruitment package for prospective applicants and college placement offices (including job announcement, salary schedule, school calendar, application form, and descriptions of school/community profiles and resources)."[3]

2 From the Council of the Great City Schools Urban Educator Web site: www.cgcs.org/.
3 From Swift, D. (1984). *Finding and keeping teachers: Strategies for small schools.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 259 875)

Approaches to teacher recruitment that have been identified for urban areas include:

- Expand advertising in newspapers across the country
- Set up a computerized database of teacher candidates
- Host/sponsor a teacher fair
- Begin offering job guarantees to top student-teachers
- Rework recruitment literature to include new and common language
- Expand state program to include those who need even more training and coursework to achieve full certification (e.g., pre-interns, veteran teachers as mentors)
- Offer enticing incentives and alternative-training programs to attract and retain qualified teachers (e.g., signing bonuses, performance-based teacher bonus)
- Look for state teacher-recruitment grants and school-university partnerships
- Look at surrounding districts for recruitment techniques and/or programs[4]

Approaches to teacher recruitment that have been identified in rural areas include:

- Review college placement files for persons from nearby or similar rural areas who are more likely to be satisfied in rural school districts
- Emphasize the quality of rural life and special features (geography, climate, historical sites, cuisine, and isolation)
- Arrange (require) family interviews with overnight or weekend visits
- Include school support personnel in recruitment activities (preparing information packets, seeking applicants, and participating in interview activities)
- Involve the community by having a school patron host the prospective family, by encouraging a community potluck, or by arranging a tour of interesting sites

4 From Chaddock, G.R. (1998, September 15). Lots of students, not enough teachers. *Christian Science Monitor*

- Arrange "package deals," employing the spouse in the school system or the community
- Pay all or part of relocation expenses

As a long-range strategy, districts have often cooperatively sponsored scholarships requiring that recipients teach in small districts or forgive student financial aid loans for persons who teach in rural areas.

Selection

Job descriptions should state desirable qualifications, duties, and responsibilities. Some charter provisions allow schools to bypass the requirement of hiring only certified teachers; check your state's charter law. The selection panel must be aware of conflict of interest and/or nepotism laws; serving the school with one's personal interests driving decisions can be dangerous. Steps for the selection process include:

1. Select an interview panel. This may include the head of the school, teacher(s), parent(s), and even student(s).
2. Collect and review applications—then invite selected applicants for interview.
3. The interview process:
   - Develop questions prior to the interviews (see Tool I). Maintain consistency, asking the same general questions of all interviewees.
   - Outline what is expected of employees. Explain the school's vision and mission.
   - Ask interviewee if he/she has any questions.
4. Candidates are chosen on the basis of fit with required job duties. Sometimes second interviews are necessary or desirable if two or more of the applicants are competitive.
5. Do a reference and background check on the selected applicant. Check the background, credentials, teaching experience, and all references.[5] Some states and charters require fingerprinting for a criminal background check.

5 When asking references about an applicant, you can expect to get information on dates of employment, rates of pay, and whether the reference would rehire the applicant. The referring individual cannot be expected to volunteer more information than that because of legal ramifications (e.g., character defamation).

See Tool I: Interviewing: What to Explore and What to Avoid (Page 85)

Retention

Activities to retain personnel start the day after hiring and should include the following:

- Providing orientation information about the school and district, including the names and duties of staff members, administrative policies, curriculum, and community
- Involving the community in welcoming the teacher
- Pairing the new teacher with a master teacher
- Involving the teacher in an activity outside the classroom that requires interaction with other school personnel
- Visiting the teacher's classroom
- Helping the new teacher define professional development and appropriate activities
- Allowing sabbatical and professional leave for career development activities and for district business
- Allowing faculty exchanges with other districts, large and small
- Reimbursing professional dues[6]

Orientation and Induction

Have an introductory trial period for employees (e.g., three months). Have an employee handbook/guidebook that covers all policies. Employees should sign that they have received and read policies.

See Tool II: Sample Employee Statement of Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures (Page 86)

6 3 From Swift, D. (1984). *Finding and keeping teachers: Strategies for small schools.* (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 259 875)

Terms of Employment

At-will employment. If your organization is an at-will employer, then employment is of mutual consent between the school and the employee. Thus, either party has the right to terminate the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause or advance notice.

Tuberculosis testing. Though not required in all states, TB testing is strongly advised.

Teacher contracts

- Develop contracts in conjunction with personnel policies. Contracts should be prepared prior to the hiring and selection process.
- Outline the conditions and arrangements of employment, including duties, daily schedule, and school year calendar.
- Employment at-will legally supersedes all contractual agreements unless the contract specifically states the duration of employment (e.g., from August 28th through June 14th, 1999).
- Generally, duration of contracts is one school year.
- Renewal of contracts for the following school year should occur after the six-month formal evaluation. (See Staff Supervision and Evaluation on following page.) Such notice facilitates the retention of quality staff.

See example in Tool III: Sample Employment Contract (Page 87).
It is strongly advised that the sample not be copied verbatim.
Rather, spend some time considering what is best for your school.

Employee classifications

- Full-time exempt: Average workweek is 40 or more hours, not eligible for overtime pay. Administrators, full-time teachers, and sometimes secretaries fall into this salaried category.
- Part-time exempt: Average workweek is less than 40 hours, not eligible for overtime pay. Part-time teachers are classified as such and are salaried.

- Nonexempt: Either full- or part-time, eligible to receive overtime pay, if applicable. Check your state's laws. Nonexempt employees keep individual timecards. Building janitors/engineers are salaried. Aides, assistants, and playground supervisors are hourly. Secretaries can fall into either category.

Collective bargaining laws (if applicable). These must be followed if teachers are union members. Contact the local/state teachers' union to obtain the teacher union guidelines, and check your charter law.

Personnel files

- These contain information on employees' personal and emergency contact information, qualifications, certification, evaluations, promotions, compensation, disciplinary action, professional development (e.g., coursework), legally mandated items (e.g., criminal background checks), tax and retirement withholding forms, and so forth.
- Employees are legally allowed full access to their own files. Files should remain in the office in which they are permanently housed (possibly in a locked file cabinet).
- Information contained within the files is strictly confidential.

Staff supervision and evaluation

- *Performance reviews* are unbiased, standardized evaluations that are administered with regularity. Their purpose is to serve as a measurement of professional achievement, growth, and development; to assess instructional methods; and to document the need for improvement.
- *Written evaluations*, or performance reviews, include positive feedback, recommendations, goals, and development plans. Observations are a strongly recommended part of the teacher evaluation process (see the following section). Teacher evaluations may be conducted by the head of the school or by using peer review or 360° feedback[7]; self-assessments are also valuable evaluation instruments. Nonteaching staff are evaluated by their immediate supervisor. It may be beneficial to refer to the original job description prior to conducting the evaluation.
- Ideally, all members of the learning community participate in the design of evaluation instruments.

7 360° feedback is an evaluation done by several individuals who interact directly with the employee being evaluated. Such evaluators may include the head of the school, parents, students, and peers; thus, evaluators may supervise or be supervised by the employee.

- Limit recommendations to two or three significant items; this allows teachers (particularly those in their first year) to focus on improvements without being overwhelmed. Recommendations are revisited in future evaluations to assess progress.

See Tool IV-A Sample Teacher Evaluation Form (Page 88)

- *Observations* are both formal and informal. Formal observations should be scheduled in advance and are in writing. Ideally, duration of the formal observation spans the entire length of the lesson (or as reasonable). Informal observations may be unannounced or casually mentioned ahead of time; these may be for any duration.

See Tool IV-B for a Sample Formal Observation Form (Page 89)

- It is advised that the evaluators schedule all evaluations and observations for the year on their personal calendars. This ensures that evaluations are not overlooked. Table 1 gives a recommendation for scheduling.

Table 1. Recommendations for Scheduling Employee Evaluations

Employee	Evaluated By	Schedule
1st-year teachers	Head of school, plus any additional member of the evaluation team	Formal evaluation and observations: Three months after start of school Six months after start of school Informal observations throughout Decision to renew contract after second evaluation
Returning teachers	Head of school, plus any additional member of the evaluation team	Formal evaluation and observations: Six months after start of school Informal observations throughout Decision to renew contract after evaluation
Other staff	Immediate supervisor	Six months after the start of school
Head of School	Board of directors (personnel committee)	Prior to end of contract year

- **Disagreement.** If an employee disagrees with an evaluation or observation, a written objection may be appended to the review. Also see the Personnel Issues: Grievance Procedure section of this workbook if such review is necessary.
- **Assisting poor performance.** If an evaluation reveals poor job performance, recommendations for improvement are made and reviewed for progress as necessary. If there has been no progress at time of review, a formal corrective action plan may be the next step. (See the Personnel Issues: Other Policies section of this workbook) Careful documentation is crucial in the event that termination is initiated by the school.
- All formal evaluations and observations should be kept in the personnel file.

Termination

- Voluntary termination is initiated by the employee. Written notice, including reason for leaving, given two weeks in advance is standard procedure.
- Involuntary termination may be initiated by the school for various reasons, such as failure to follow a corrective action plan. In the case of a tenured employee, refer to teacher union guidelines (obtained from your local/state teachers' union).

Compensation and Benefits

Salary schedule—Salary is generally assigned on the basis of employee's experience in accordance with the terms of the charter. The local school district may provide you with an example of a current schedule, though it is not necessary to follow it. Many charters have designed nontraditional salary schedules. However, be aware that salary may not be based on characteristics protected by law (gender, race, religion, national origin, etc.).

Alternative compensation—Salary is only one form of financial compensation. Other options include pay for performance, equity (part ownership, e.g., stock), and bonuses. These alternative forms of compensation should be considered very carefully in terms of their effects on employee motivation and the long-term impact on the school's financial stability.

Tenure—Refer to your school's charter, your state charter laws and, if applicable, teacher union guidelines.

Payday—Paydays should occur on a regular basis (monthly or biweekly). Salaried employees are usually paid over a 12-month period (i.e., contract pay is spread out so that employees are paid during, but not for, nonschool periods).

Payroll deductions—In addition to required federal and state withholdings, the school may participate in the state public employee retirement system. The employee must authorize other deductions in writing.

Direct deposit—This option allows for the direct deposit of paychecks into employee checking or savings accounts. Arrangements are made with the school's bank (if independent) or the local district payroll department (if operating under that system).

Retirement plan—Both the school and the employee may pay into this benefit. Plans may be private or public. Information on public plans may be obtained from your state's public employee retirement system.

Insurance

- Health and Life—It is suggested that the health benefits offered by the school be comparable to those offered by the area public schools or sponsoring district. These benefits should at least include health, dental, and vision.
- Unemployment—Check your state's eligibility requirements and rates.

Vacation—School employee vacations are generally unpaid and coincide with school breaks and vacations, less the required preparatory days prior to the beginning of the school year (as stated in the contract). One or two paid personal days are optional as well.

Sick leave

- Ask employees to call in as soon as possible and to inform the school on a daily basis as to their status. This will assist in getting and retaining a substitute teacher as needed.
- School employees usually receive sick pay benefits. It is best to decide how many days of sick leave can be accrued at one time. However, you are not legally required to pay out unused sick pay benefits at the end of the contract period or at termination.
- See medical leave (generally longer term), below.

Pregnancy—Federal law requires that employers cover pregnancy as a temporary disability (see medical leave, below). Pregnant women may not be denied the opportunity to work if they are physically able to do so.

Other leave:

- Requesting notice—It is advisable that employees give notice for foreseeable leave as soon as possible before the beginning date of the leave.
- Personal leave—Requests for personal leave should be granted at the discretion of the head of the school. Such leave is taken for compelling reasons that are not medically related and are generally given without pay. (Compare with personal days under vacation.)
- Medical leave—Such leave is for periods longer than what is covered by sick leave. It is generally given without pay. Physician's statements are presented as evidence of need. Length varies greatly among states as well as compared to the Federal Medical Leave Act (which protects up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12 months).
- Family leave—Check your state's Medical Leave Act provisions. These vary greatly among states as well as compared to the Federal Medical Leave Act (which protects up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave during any 12 months). Family leave is intended for birth or adoption, or medical care of an employee's seriously ill child, spouse, or parent. This type of leave is generally unpaid, though often employees may use accrued vacation days and/or sick leave.
- Jury duty—It is suggested that upon court notification to report to jury duty, the employee request postponement of duty until nonschool [illegible] months. If the request is not granted, the employee may be given a preestablished maximum time off with no or partial loss of salary. If salary is paid during duty, it is acceptable that juror pay earned during this period be signed over to the school.

- Military duty—In some states it is unlawful to refuse a leave of absence for a member of an organized militia of the state who has been called into active service. The employee must be released for duty until the assignment is completed. Check your state's laws.

- Bereavement—This leave is granted to arrange and/or attend the funeral of an immediate family member. This leave may need to extend into a personal leave of absence. Many employers offer bereavement pay.

Workers' Compensation—Check your state's law concerning leaves and pay for work-related illness or injury. It is recommended that cases be reviewed on an individual basis regarding leave time.

Staff Development and Continuing Education

Staff development and continuing education are crucial for staff to keep up with the pace of rapid change and for role modeling by teachers as being life-long learners.[8] By learning to adapt their attitudes and practices to myriad changes that are expected in the coming decades, teachers will be able to give students the tools to deal with ever-changing circumstances.

Types of **professional development** include, but are not limited to, course-work at local colleges/universities, cooperative ventures with local agencies during breaks, professional memberships, workshops/inservices, retreats, and conferences.

Example courses for staff development: teaching hands-on science, instructional technology, foreign language, diversity training, children's literature, CPR/first aid/treatment of hazardous materials, "customer service" training for front-line staff, and so forth.

An employee's **development portfolio**, or record of development activities, is to be added to the personnel file and reviewed as part of the evaluation process.

Financial assistance. Because development of staff is a benefit to the school, a portion or all of the related expenses may be paid by the school. If the school pays for all or part of the coursework, such activities should be approved in advance by the head of the school.

"Most leaders instigating change are like gardeners standing over their plants, imploring them: 'Grow! Try harder! You can do it!' But if a seedling has no room to grow, no soil, and no water, it will never become a tree. Similarly, if [schools] don't foresee the obstacles that arise naturally wherever growth and learning take place, their change initiatives will fail. All effective organizations take part in this 'dance of change,' a balance between growth and the limits to growth, whose impact can be anticipated and mastered."

—*Peter Senge*[9]

8 Senge, P.M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization.*
9 For more information, read Edwards, M.A. (1998). Turbo-charging professional development. *The School Administrator*, 55(11), 34-36.

See Tool V: Exploring Resources for Professional Development (Page 90)

Code of Conduct

Employees should be expected to engage in professional behavior with fellow employees, students, parents, and those with whom he/she interacts on behalf of or while representing the school.

It is essential to have clearly established harassment policies and procedures. Failure to comply with harassment law can cause problems for employees as well as the employer (see the following section on grievance procedures). Forms of harassment include gender, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Harassment includes, but is not limited to, jokes, threats, put-downs (can be disguised as "compliments with attitude"), decorations, and innuendo. See the footnote under Grievance Procedure below.

For specifics on Sexual Harassment, see Tool VI (Page 91)

Grievance Procedure

Most charter schools have not established grievance procedures. The assumption that there will not be any problems or disputes worthy of a formal process can result in greater difficulty for the school in the future.

See Tool VII: Sample Grievance Procedure (Page 93)

Suggestions for a grievance procedure:

- Procedures must be clearly established and all employees are to be trained on the process and encouraged to follow it. All employees involved in disputes will be subject to due process.
- Generally, review of issues by the board is limited to cases where the hearing committee has not followed the grievance policy.

- If the attempt to resolve the grievance through the hearing process is not successful, professional mediation or legal intervention becomes necessary.
- If the grievance is in response to a negative performance evaluation, a timely written objection may be attached to the evaluation and kept in the employee's personnel file.
- It is crucial that if the grievance is a complaint of discrimination, the employer act on it within 24 hours. This means that the employer should begin to carefully investigate the complaint[10] to determine as many facts about the issue as possible; discretion and objectivity are paramount. It is essential that the primary problem is clearly identified; red herrings can severely muddle the issue. Witness statements may be appropriate.

Other Policies

Breaks
Consult your state's labor laws for hourly and salaried employees.

Punctuality and attendance
The school should establish expectations for punctuality and attendance. For example, employees who are tardy or absent may be expected to call the head of the school at least one hour before the start of the school day. Repeated tardiness or absence may result in corrective action or, ultimately, in termination.

Dress code
Dress should reflect the culture of the school.

10 Even hearsay of harassment constitutes an obligation to investigate possible misconduct; complaints do not have to be in writing in order to be worthy of investigation. Waiting to pursue an investigation can seriously implicate an employer should a legal investigation ensue. Employers can be liable for the behavior of an employee even if they "knew or should have known about the conduct and failed to stop it." Some organizations, such as the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), offer a free mediation program.

Corrective action
Reasons for corrective action include assisting the marginal teacher for poor job performance, to address inappropriate conduct (e.g., harassment in any form) or excessive tardiness/absenteeism. The purpose is not to punish the employee but rather to correct the behavior. Corrective action is a formal procedure for behavior modification, the progressive steps of which include: a verbal warning, written warnings, and, finally, suspension or discharge if no improvement is evident. These steps may progress as necessary/appropriate. If the school has an employment-at-will policy, decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Careful documentation is crucial in the event that termination is initiated by the school.

Safety and health
Employees should be aware of the school's safety procedures and protocol for emergency situations.

See the Facilities/Services section of *Workbook 2: State Regulatory Issues*.

Volunteers and outside consultants
Individuals assisting at the school, whether paid or unpaid, should be made aware of policies. Distributing an employee handbook at the beginning of their work with the school is advised.

Tool I: Interviewing: What To Explore and What To Avoid

1. Consider what the applicant should know about your school. What can you tell him or her about your vision/mission, educational philosophy, history, and participatory process?

2. Ask questions that will address the needs of your school as well as give those that will give you a good idea about the character of the candidate. For example:

   - What strengths will you bring to our school?
   - Describe your teaching/work experience?
   - Describe your educational background?
   - What are your areas of interest in education?
   - Why are you interested in a charter school?
   - What are some personal hobbies/interests?
   - Any questions?

   When trying to understand how a candidate will respond in a given situation, it is better to ask him or her to describe a past event or situation rather than asking about what might be done in the future.[11]

3. The following areas are legally off-limits. Questions to avoid are those that specifically target or are likely to elicit information about:

   - Religious background
   - National origin
   - Age
   - Disability/impairment (See the Personnel Issues: Employee Selection Practices of this workbook)
   - Marital or family status

11 From Eder, R.W., & Harris, M.M. (1999). *The employment interview handbook.*

Tool II: Sample Employee Statement of Acknowledgement of Policies and Procedures

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

I have been informed about the _____ School's Policies and Procedures Handbook, and I understand that I have the responsibility to become familiar with all polices and procedures included in them.

Further, I have read and understand the provisions of the following School policies, procedures and guidelines, and agree that adherence to them and all others as a condition of continued employment by the School:

- ☐ Employment At Will
- ☐ Equal Employment Opportunity
- ☐ Grievance Procedure
- ☐ Code of Conduct and Harassment
- ☐ Safety and Health

I understand that the procedures set forth in the Policy and Procedures handbook are operational guidelines for the School and its employees, and may, from time to time, be changed as necessary to improve organizational efficiency. As such, these procedures shall not be construed as constituting a contract between the School and myself. School staff are employed and serve at will. The employment relationship can be terminated at any time by either the employee or the School.

Employee Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

SAMPLE

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Tool III: Sample Employment Contract[12]

It is strongly advised that the sample not be copied verbatim. Consider what works best for your school.

EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

_____ agrees to be a teacher in grade(s)_____ at the _____ School. The salary for this position will be $_____ which is Step _____ on the Teacher Salary Scale for 1999-2000. Pay will be divided over a twelve-month period.

The requirements of employment include attendance at staff meetings which shall be scheduled before, during, or after the period of school attendance; attendance at all open houses and other school functions; communication with parents through conferences and other means; the timely preparation of reports on students; and other such functions as assigned and spelled out in the personnel policies and procedures handbook.

You should be familiar with and comply with the general, educational and personnel policies of the school as amended from time to time. Health and other benefits are as described in the attached personnel policy.

The 1999-2000 school year will begin for staff on Monday, August 30, 1999 (students arrive on the following Tuesday, September 7). The proposed last day of classes for students is June 9, 2000. There will be 3 days added on the instructional calendar year in the event of snow days. Staff will be available one full week after the last instructional school day for curriculum planning and report activity.

I accept the terms of this appointment.

Employee:_____ Date:_____

Head of School:_____ Date:_____

Please sign and return both copies to the Head of the School as soon as possible. A signed copy will be returned to your for your records.

SAMPLE

12 Adapted from the Massachusetts Charter Schools handbook sample contracts, Tool J

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Tool IV-A: Sample Teacher Evaluation Form

Adapt as necessary to include self-assessments, peer reviews, etc., and for nonteaching staff.

TEACHER EVALUATION

_____ SCHOOL

Employee:_____ Position:_____

Strengths:

Areas for improvement:

Follow-up items from previous evaluations (if applicable):

Instructional goals:

Interpersonal goals:

Goals for professional development/coursework:

Other comments:

Evaluated by:_____ Position:_____

Date:_____

SAMPLE

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Tool IV-B: Sample Formal Observation Form

Comments should be positive. Limit recommendations to two or three significant items; this allows teachers (particularly those in their first year) to focus on improvements without being overwhelmed. Recommendations are revisited in future evaluations to assess progress.

FORMAL TEACHING OBSERVATION

_____ SCHOOL

Date _____ Time_____

Teacher_____ Observer_____

Description of lesson (including location):

SAMPLE

Objective of lesson:_____

Duration of lesson:_____

Lesson format (lecture, group work, individual, class discussion):

Methods and materials (hands-on activity, worksheets, multimedia):

Comments:

Recommendations:

Observed by:_____ Position:_____

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Tool V: Exploring Resources for Professional Development

Your community may have access to resources that go beyond the traditional "coursework" approach to professional development. The following resources are given to help get you started; they may or may not be available in your area.

1. **Community resources/cultural centers**—some of these may be interested in cooperative ventures with teachers during summer months/ breaks.
    - Libraries are a great resource for the latest children's books.
    - Forest Service—A great opportunity for teachers to work on hands-on projects that can transfer to the classroom.
    - Museums.
    - Others?
2. **Local Institutions of Higher Education** can offer coursework in a variety of areas, including teacher education and foreign language.
    - Community colleges.
    - Universities or four-year colleges.
    - Distance Education Organizations—If there are no local colleges or universities, staff can learn online in "virtual" classrooms. A list is available online at ccism.pc.athabascau.ca/html/ccism/deresrce/ institut.htm. Check online programs carefully for accreditation; state colleges' continuing education offices may be able to assist with recommendations.
3. **State or regional agencies** can supply materials or organize presentations/ forums.
    - State departments of education.
    - Regional educational laboratories.
    - Hospitals can provide support on a variety of health issues.

4. **People who are willing to present**

   - Teachers who are members of professional associations (e.g., National Teachers of Mathematics) may present a discovery.
   - Mental health counselors can help in understanding a variety of situations.
   - Public health representatives from area hospitals can present information on disease control, handling biohazardous waste, first aid, and so forth.

5. **Sites for workshops/retreats** can vary depending on the scope of the activity.

   - School library or gym.
   - Local conference centers (some of the larger hotels have these).
   - Retreat centers—These are especially good for two-day retreats. Why a retreat? If the staff plan a reflective time, it may be beneficial to leave school property altogether.
   - Others?

Tool VI: Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination that violates Titles VII and IX of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1972, respectively. It can take two forms: quid pro quo and hostile environment. In quid pro quo, an individual may ask another individual for sexual favors in exchange for privileges (e.g., a teacher asks for favors from a student in exchange for improved grades). A hostile environment is created when the harassment becomes so severe it impacts the victim's ability to function in that environment. Harassment can be both initiated by and directed at school employees, students, or visitors.

The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission states:

> Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature constitutes sexual harassment when submission to or rejection of this conduct explicitly or implicitly affects an individual's employment, unreasonably interferes with an individual's work performance or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.

Sexual harassment can occur in a variety of circumstances, including, but not limited to, the following:

- The victim as well as the harasser may be a woman or a man. The victim does not have to be of the opposite sex.
- The harasser can be the victim's supervisor, an agent of the employer, a supervisor in another area, a coworker, or a nonemployee.
- The victim does not have to be the person harassed but could be anyone affected by the offensive conduct.
- Unlawful sexual harassment may occur without economic injury to or discharge of the victim.
- The harasser's conduct must be unwelcome.

It is helpful for the victim to directly inform the harasser that the conduct is unwelcome and must stop. The victim should use any employer complaint mechanism or grievance system available.

When investigating allegations of sexual harassment, EEOC looks at the whole record: the circumstances, such as the nature of the sexual advances, and the context in which the alleged incidents occurred. A determination on the allegations is made from the facts on a case-by-case basis.

Prevention is the best tool to eliminate sexual harassment in the workplace. Employers are encouraged to take steps necessary to prevent sexual harassment from occurring. They should clearly communicate to employees that sexual harassment will not be tolerated. They can do so by establishing an effective complaint or grievance process and taking immediate and appropriate action when an employee complains." [13]

13 From the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Web site, "Facts on Sexual Harassment" at www.eeoc.gov/facts/fs-sex.html

Tool VII: Sample Grievance Procedure[14]

In the event of a problem or dispute with other personnel, students, or parents, an employee may submit a complaint following a process such as the one described below. Careful documentation is key to a successful process. All documentation is to be included in the personnel file. The following example should be adapted to your school after careful consideration.

1. The employee will make a good faith effort to work with the immediate supervisor to resolve the conflict. This effort will consist of problem identification, possible solutions, selection of resolution, process for implementation of resolution, and scheduling a follow-up. In the event that the compliant involves the immediate supervisor, the employee will work with that individual's supervisor.

2. If the issue is not resolved after a good faith attempt as outlined above, the employee may submit the grievance in writing to the head of the school.

3. Within one week of receipt of the written complaint, the hearing committee shall schedule a hearing at a mutually convenient time and place for discussion of the complaint with all parties involved. The process is similar to that of the initial good faith attempt at a resolution. If members of the hearing committee have a conflict of interest in the subject of proceedings, or are involved in the issue personally, those members shall be excused from their roles on the committee.

4. A decision shall be rendered at the completion of the hearing process. Appeals should be made as soon as possible.

14 Adapted from Sample Personnel Policy, www.uscharterschools.org/res_dir/res_primary/res_personnel.htm

Tool VIII: Personnel Checklist

Personnel Policies and Procedures Checklist			
✔		Due Date	Lead Person
	Staffing Process		
	Determine staffing needs		
	Write job descriptions/ads		
	Post want ads for jobs		
	Screen and select potential candidates		
	Create interview questions		
	Establish employee classifications		
	Create contract format		
	Arrange and conduct interviews		
	Finalize selections		
	Do background/reference check		
	Hire and contract		
	Orientation		
	Create personnel files		
	Compensation and Benefits		
	Establish salary schedule		
	Establish regular paydays and check distribution process		
	Make arrangements for direct deposit		
	Make arrangements for payroll deductions (e.g., PERS)		
	Make arrangements for retirement plans (and payroll deductions) and insurance		
	Determine number of sick days		
	Establish policy on leaves (including personal days)		
	Staff Development		
	Create evaluation and observation forms		
	Schedule all formal evaluations and observations for the year, including goals for staff development		
	Plan inservice days/staff retreats/establish financial assistance policy		
	Code of Conduct		
	Establish expectations in writing		
	Write sexual harassment policy		
	Grievance Procedure and Corrective Action		
	Write formal grievance procedure		
	Establish corrective action procedure		
	Other Policies		
	Determine break schedule		
	Establish dress code		
	Create employee handbook with personnel policies and procedures		
	Collect employee acknowledgement of policies and procedures		

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Internal Policy Development

Basics of Policy

What Are Policies?

- Policies are guidelines that create a framework to carry out operational duties
- Policies offer structure—charter schools need to monitor the balance between structure and flexibility
- Decisions that are made based on the educational philosophy of the school

What Can Written Policies and Procedures Do for You[1]?

- Establish a standard for behavior and a common body of knowledge
- Support unpleasant but necessary requirements
- Provide a valuable orientation and training tool for volunteers, employees, board members, and clients
- Help ensure operational consistency

Why Adopt a Policy?[2]

A governing board adopts policies to regulate some aspect of the operation of the schools in its school district. The governing board needs to:

- Establish a vision and mission of its school
- Establish a rule for its own governance
- Define the rights and responsibilities of its employees and students
- Ensure that a particular matter will be handled consistently to ensure fairness between two similarly situated students or employees
- Ensure that a service or activity is conducted in accordance with procedures that will reduce the district's risk of liability
- Comply with state and/or federal law in adopting a specific policy

1 Information adapted from the Nonprofit Risk Management Center.
2 Information adapted from Pickrell, T. (1995). *Why adopt a policy?*

Educational Philosophy

Charter schools need to identify their educational philosophy, vision, and mission from the beginning. This is an important step in determining what the school will achieve, how the curriculum will be designed, and which individuals will be affected. The educational philosophy should include sections on goals and objectives, curriculum and standards, assessment and evaluation, and instruction.

References/Resources are given in Tool VIII (Page 122)

When dealing with policies and procedures, it is easy to develop too many. Therefore, try to keep things simple, but cover necessary details. If the school has an excessive amount, it may cause some policies to no longer be effective. Suggestions are to cover what needs to be covered and to be clear in what the policy is covering.

See Tools I, II, and III: Activities for Policy Development and Evaluation (Page 110, 111, & 112)

Student/Parent Involvement

In order for a school to operate effectively, parents must take an active role to participate and be involved with their students' education. Charter schools enter into a variety of contracts with parents and students each year. The form and content of the contracts may vary. In some schools, student and parent contracts are fairly general and only outline some of the schools' expectations regarding student conduct and parent involvement. Others are specific in nature and contain specific involvement criteria. Contracts are often viewed as an essential component of an effective student and parent involvement policy.

Parent Involvement Contracts[3]

Suggested components for a parent involvement contract are:

- Parent participation—Parents agree to actively participate in parent/teacher conferences, parent involvement activities, and parent education opportunities. Volunteer at the school and attend orientation meetings.
- Homework/classwork—Parents agree to provide materials for student, assure homework is done in compliance with the homework policy, and attend school conferences.
- Reading—Parents of some charter schools agree to help students read for at least 30 minutes each night. (Practice of other subjects may be included.)
- Behavior—Parents agree to support schoolwide discipline policy, follow through with any behavior problems noted by the teacher, and visit the school as needed.
- Attendance—Parents agree to assure their children are appropriately dressed, arrive on time, attend school daily, notify school of change of address, and notify school of child's absence.
- Materials/school property—Parents agree to ensure that students do not destroy materials or bring destructive materials to school.
- Safety—Parents agree to not allow students to bring weapons of any kind to school.

The contract should include a signature of the parent/guardian, the name of the student, and the date. This is only a sample of suggested components, and the suggestions are not exclusive.

Student Responsibility Code

Appropriate student behavior in school is vital in order to form a successful school program. Students need to be held responsible for their actions and also create a healthy atmosphere. For complete information pertaining to student responsibility code, look at your state charter school law or state education code. It will likely be that the student responsibility code will differ from state to state and/or from school to school.

3 Information adapted from Fenton Avenue Charter School. (1997). *Home-school contract.*

Discipline

The discipline of students is an important, and often sensitive, matter. Parents need to be made aware of policies surrounding discipline. Here are some suggestions to include for discipline policies.

Dress Code

- Students should come to school clean and neat
- Students should be dressed appropriately; uniforms may be required
- Students should wear appropriate shoes; specify what is NOT acceptable
- Prohibit gang attire in order to avoid conflict as much as possible
- Prohibit hats or caps in the classrooms or at school if this is a perceived problem

Rules of Discipline

- Respect authority
- Respect and be courteous to other students
- Respect all property
- Address playground, cafeteria, gym, and classroom rules
- Address fighting, language, harassment, and disrespect on school grounds
- Follow through with all disciplinary action

Discipline Procedures/Consequences for Poor Student Behavior

- Warnings
- Loss of privileges
- Isolation in a supervised area
- Parent notification by telephone or letter
- Request for a parent conference
- Detention during lunch, after school; make parents aware of all periods of after-school detention
- Incident reports, referrals, suspensions, expulsions

In dealing with serious misconduct, it is necessary for the school to realize the student is violating the state education code. This violation is grounds for suspension or expulsion from class or school.

Code of Ethics

- Charter schools may adopt a code of ethics from their state education code, whether it be for students and/or staff
- The code could be worded as a commitment to the school, students, and/or to the public

See the Personnel Issues: Code of Conduct section in this workbook.

Student/Parent Handbook

A student and parent handbook can be very helpful to all schools. Handbooks inform students and parents about necessary items that help the school run smoothly. Also, a handbook gives parents and students a chance to be involved in the education process and makes both students and parents aware of their own responsibilities. Some experts have suggested developing a student information system that would include student information on demographics, academics, IEPs and other related information for special education students, attendance, enrollment, and immunizations. This would allow the charter school to become aware of its students' needs and general background information.

See Tool IV: Student/Parent Handbook Criteria (Page 113)

Student/Parent Policy Manual

Separate from the student/parent handbook, charter schools may want to develop a student and a parent policy manual, which includes ALL policies. This allows everyone involved to be informed of relevant policies and procedures and is a good tool for keeping the students and parents involved.

See Tool V: Suggested Criteria for a Student/Parent Policy Manual (Page 114)

Other Policy Issues

In order to operate successfully, charter school staff must first outline their policies and procedures. Often, it is helpful to keep policies and procedures separate for clarity and organizational purposes. This process needs to be done in conjunction with the school's educational philosophy. In other words, ensure that all of the policies and procedures fit into the school's vision, mission, goals and objectives, curriculum and standards, assessment and evaluation, and instruction.

Fiscal Management Policy[4]

See the Business Plan and Financial Management section of this workbook for more detailed information on the following.

Budget

- Establish a budget
- Establish a monitoring process

The budget development process will most likely be a major responsibility of the school director or the board. The monitoring process will need to be a regular and routine process in terms of revenue and expenditures with the budget plan. Determine and develop a policy designating a specific person or persons to take on these responsibilities.

Check Signing/Expenditure Authorization/Purchasing

- Develop policies on signing checks, recording transactions, and purchasing
- Designate who will authorize transactions; other transactions and record-keeping may be done by a bookkeeper or a business manager
- Establish a policy concerning expense reimbursement

Payroll/Accounting Systems

- Establish a sound method for payroll, tax withholdings, and retirement funds
- Perform fiscal management "in-house"

4 Some information adapted from the Premack, E. (1998) *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed.).

- Contract with an outside bookkeeper or certified public accountant (CPA) to keep the school's books, reports, and payroll; if funds do not allow this, try contracting with a CPA to at least get started with general guidelines for operating the school's accounting system
- Contract with a school district to perform the same services (choose one path)
- Establish bank account information and salary schedule policies
- Develop a system of financial reporting

Revenues and Fundraising

- Establish policies related to the allotted public education and fundraising funds
- Know how and where specific funds are to be recorded and dispersed (identify needs)

Audit

- Some schools establish an audit committee of the board that contracts for and receives the annual audit report; typically, a school is audited annually
- Establish a policy to select an audit firm; some suggest obtaining an audit firm early on in the fiscal year, prior to the audit, in order to fix problematic areas and to establish that you are meeting all requirements

Other

- Be aware and become familiar with the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). These are established by the Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB)

Insurance[5]

Suggested forms of insurance (not exclusive):

- *Property insurance*—to cover losses sustained by any real or personal property of the school from theft, fire, earthquake, vandalism, and so forth.
- *General liability insurance*—to protect the school's assets in the event that it is sued or found liable for some debt or wrong

5 Some insurance information adapted from Premack, E. (1998). *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed.).

- *Staff and directors errors and omissions insurance*—to cover the staff and directors from personal liability during their work at the school
- *Workers Compensation and unemployment insurance*—payroll-related insurance as required by any applicable state and federal laws.

Charter schools may have difficulty finding a policy suitable to their needs and one that is within their financial boundaries. In some states, insurance agencies have begun actively seeking out charter schools. For example, some insurance companies have developed *Charter School Property and Casualty Insurance Programs*. Coverage may include: property, general liability, automobile, crime, boiler and machinery, workers compensation, legal liability, and expanded limits.

Other Suggestions

- Join with other neighboring districts in insurance purchasing pools
- Obtain insurance from commercial and/or public sources
- Obtain liability insurance, preferably before the school begins operation
- Purchase property-related and payroll-related insurance as soon as major property is acquired and prior to staff employment
- Be aware that insurance costs vary; before you purchase be sure to compare costs from several sources

See Tool VI: Insurance Summary (Page 115) for a list of typical coverages for charter schools.

Governance and Board Bylaws[6]

The Open Meeting Law guarantees the public's right to attend and participate in meetings of local legislative bodies. "In accordance with state open meeting laws, the Board shall hold its meetings in public and shall conduct closed sessions during these meetings only to discuss confidential matters specified by law" (California School Boards Association, 1998). Suggested meeting protocol:

6 Information adapted from the California School Board Association, www.csba.org/PS/samples/bb9320.htm.

- Specify the time and place for regular meetings (e.g., the second Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the school).
- Post an agenda at least 72 hours in advance at locations accessible to the public.
- Special meetings may be called by the presiding officer or by a majority of the board.
- Written notice of a special meeting needs to be delivered personally to all board members and the local media who have requested a notice.
- Emergency meetings may be held without a 24-hour notice if: (1) a work stoppage or other activity that severely impairs public health and/or safety as determined by the majority of the board; (2) a crippling disaster severely impairing public health and/or safety as determined by the majority of the board.
- Adjourned meetings: Any meeting may adjourn to a later time and place with a majority vote by the board.
- Teleconferencing: A teleconference is a meeting of the board in which members are in different locations, connected by electronic means.
- Hearings: The board may occasionally convene public hearings. Hearings are held for the sole purpose of allowing the board and public to receive information.

For more information, see Tool II: Bylaws Checklist in this workbook.

Enrollment

Charter schools must be accessible to all school-aged children regardless of:

- Race
- National origin
- Gender
- Ethnicity
- Language proficiency
- Physical or mental disability
- Academic achievement

When establishing enrollment policies and procedures, be aware of the laws that apply: Title IX of 1972 (sex discrimination), Title VI of 1964 (race, color, national origin discrimination), and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990 (disability discrimination). These laws will help inform charter schools about discrimination issues.

See the Civil Rights section of *Workbook 2: Regulatory Issues* for more information.

Enrollment procedures:

"School organizers should establish open and clear eligibility guidelines and procedures with sufficient checks and balances to reduce any appearance of impropriety" (Premack, 1997).

- Eligibility—Can be determined for admission if the student is a resident of that particular state and is above the minimum age requirement for enrollment into kindergarten.
- Selection—If eligible applicants exceed capacity, charter schools that receive federal funding are required by the Department of Education to establish a lottery system by grade or age. Preference may be given to those living in the same city or town as the charter school and to those children who already have siblings attending the school. The lottery process should continue until all applicants have been assigned a number. Applicants not admitted should be placed on a waiting list in the order in which they were assigned a number.
- Placement—Special education students need to be identified, evaluated, and placed.
- Residency—Develop enrollment limitations for housing students; ensure privacy, nondiscriminatory selection, and proper living accommodations.

Enrollment packages should include the following:

1. School vision/mission statement
2. Description of the responsibilities of the charter school, responsibilities of the parents and students, and applicable policies:
    - How the school will communicate with the parents
        - — Monthly reports, newsletters, parent classes

- Requirements for involvement of the parents
  - — Volunteer hours
  - — Parent/teacher conferences
  - — Orientation meetings
- Homework/classwork requirements
- Behavior and disciplinary policies
- Student code of ethics
- Attendance policies
- Dress codes
- Materials/school property guidelines
- Safety policies
- Computers and Internet policies
- May include section for parent and student signatures agreeing to the above

Provide the information in all commonly spoken languages in your school community. Relate all policies and procedures to the mission and vision of your school.

Attendance

Develop a policy on attendance in order to ensure students do, in fact, attend classes and remain in class for the designated periods of time. This system may include:

- Attendance sheets completed for each class
- Records of tardies
- Records of absences, including sick days and nonexcused absences

This is a simple system, if used properly, to account for the total student body on a daily basis and to keep current records of student activity. This type of policy is state-specific; refer to your state charter law for more information.

Public Relations/ Community Relations

This topic not only deals with marketing your school, but also dealing with the media.

Community Relations

- Develop strategies and plans to market your school effectively
- Develop linkages to other schools in your district and state in order to collaborate on ideas and share knowledge

Public Relations

- Designate a specific person who will respond to the media (press), whether it be in emergency situations, promoting your school, and/or important school board decisions
- This contact person should be familiar with the school and the media concerns
- Depending on how much a school relies on technology, a school may want to consider designating a person to deal with voice mail, e-mail addresses, and Internet Web pages
- Keep records of all contact with media sources

See the Public Relations section of *Workbook 5: Community Relations*.

Facilities/Services

Transportation

For charter schools, transportation can become extremely costly because of the lack of funding available. Therefore, parents and students may need to rely on car pools, public transportation, or bicycles. Many districts pay for transportation programs with categorical program funding However, districts have often been reluctant to share funds, unless the charter school was a conversion school or they are required (by state charter school law) to provide transportation because the district has a plan in which the allotment is preexisting through their desegregation plan. Establish a transportation policy covering all segments of the population, including special education students and limited-English-proficient students. It may be wise to also include the parents when establishing the policy.

Food Services[7]

Some charter schools (conversion) may prefer to use existing food service programs. Others may prefer developing a new food service program. Often, this is a large task and one that requires a school to look at several factors. Some factors include:

- Student demand for the service
- School ownership of food preparation space or equipment
- Cost effectiveness
- Options for food preparation (e.g., onsite or contracting with a third party)
- Student qualification of free or reduced-price lunches (some charter schools require students to bring their own lunch)

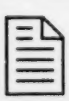
Become aware of the funding available in your state in order to determine what lunch program is best for your school. Take into consideration what facilities the school has when comparing what services you wish to provide. Also, consider hiring a food service consultant to develop and/or operate your food services program. This type of policy is state-specific; refer to your state charter law for more information.

Safety Issues

Safety policies cover a wide variety of information and are a necessity for schools. Issues include:

- Earthquake, fire, theft, crisis situations, and so forth; schedule practice drills
- Drug testing (e.g., staff, bus drivers, athletes)
- Building and zoning codes (e.g., smoking, parking, hazardous materials)

Schools should have a crisis policy including a crisis communication plan. ALL staff and students need to know these policies, and practice drills should be conducted in order to help prevent disasters.



See Tool VII: Crisis Communication Plan (Page 120)

7 Information adapted from the Premack, E. (1998). *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed.)

Harassment

Sexual harassment. "Under federal law, a school is required to have a policy against sex discrimination and notify employees, students, and elementary and secondary school parents of the policy" (Office of Civil Rights, 1997). This type of policy lets everyone know that harassment will not be tolerated. A school is required to adopt and publish grievance procedures for sex discrimination complaints. A school is also required to have at least one employee responsible for "coordinating efforts to comply with Title IX" (Office of Civil Rights, 1997).

For more information, see the Civil Rights section of *Workbook 2: Regulatory Issues*.

Harassment is an important issue that can be complicated at times. Sexual harassment is not the only type of harassment. Harassment entails physical, as well as verbal, harassment. This may be classified as "uncommon," but being aware that this type of harassment does exist is often the first step toward prevention. All employees, students, and parents need to be aware of the policies and procedures in dealing with harassment.

Tool I: Risk-Assessment Exercise for a Crisis Situation (Page 110)

Tool I: Risk-Assessment Exercise for a Crisis Situation

Directions:

Divide a sheet of paper into two columns. On the left side, list the operations within your organization that are likely to present problems during a crisis. On the right side, suggest preventative measures to address these vulnerabilities.

Problematic Operations	Preventative Measures

Tool II: Assessment of Current Policies

Directions:

Together with your team, assess the school's current policies. Compare these with what you have learned from the workbook. Don't forget to brainstorm for more ideas concerning new policies or eliminate unneeded policies!

Current Policies	What You Have Learned

Tool III: Criteria for a Student/Parent Handbook

Directions:

Together with your team members, review your school's current handbook. Assess the needs of the students and the parents to gain a better understanding of what information is necessary to include in the handbook. You may decide you need two separate handbooks. Once again, don't forget to brainstorm for new ideas!

Current Criteria	Assessment of Needs	New Criteria

1.0

Tool IV: Student/Parent Handbook Criteria[8]

The following general topics are recommended for inclusion in a student/parent handbook.

Handbook Criteria	Included
Introduction—include vision, mission	
Mission Statement—five elements: values, educational approach, curriculum focus, customer focus, and outcomes and goals	
Curriculum—include steps to developing your curriculum and sample curriculum	
Enrollment—enrollment procedures, discrimination laws, application deadlines, sample enrollment policies	
Accountability—annual report information; discuss mechanisms for measuring students' academic and nonacademic accomplishments (grading, report cards, etc.), board performance	
Assessment—techniques, need for assessment, testing required	
Leadership—school structure; describe what your leaders look like, their goals and strategies, training the leaders, and classroom observation for leaders	
Facilities—appropriate facility, locating facility, financing facility, and regulations; library hours; parental use of facilities (e.g., gym); policies for health and safety issues	
Finances and Budgeting—summary of financial plan and operating budget	
Appendices—include any sample materials you need	

8 Information adapted from Massachusetts Charter School Resource Center. (1997). *The Massachusetts charter school handbook* (3rd ed.).

Tool V: Student/Parent Policy Manual Criteria[9]

Suggestions for student/parent policy manual criteria include:

Student Manual

- A brief overview of the school's history, mission, and vision
- A brief description of the school's structures, operations, governance, and staff
- The academic calendar and schedule
- An explanation of the school's instructional program, including the curriculum and instructional strategies
- An outline of the school's student assessment plans and policies
- An explanation of the school's graduation/matriculation standards and processes, and admission and transfer policies
- An explanation of harassment policies and grievance procedures
- A code of student conduct
- An explanation of what happens when the code of conduct is violated, including suspension and expulsion matters

Parent Manual

- A brief overview of the charter school concept and the school's history
- Parent involvement expectations and responsibilities
- Reciprocal obligations of the school toward the parent and student
- An explanation of harassment policies and grievance procedures
- Constructive suggestions on how the parent can support learning in the home and family activities
- A contact list explaining how parents can raise and resolve concerns regarding the school's operations and policies and suggestions on how parents can take a constructive role in the school's governance
- A description of the school's governing structure and how parents may become involved in the school's governance

Some schools will have either one or the other; neither; or a combination of both.

9 Information adapted from Premack, E. (1998). *Charter school development guide: California edition* (Rev. ed.).

Tool VI: Insurance Summary[10]

This summary is designed to give you an overview of the typical insurance and employee benefit programs of a charter school. It is meant as a general understanding of the insurance coverages. Specific insurance contracts should be consulted for details on terms, conditions, and exclusions.

I. Commercial Package Policy

This policy typically includes several coverage parts, which are listed below.

A. Property

Coverage is provided for Buildings and Personal Property on a Blanket Basis, Special Perils Form, Agreed Value, Replacement Cost.

Blanket Insurance allows you to shift property values as long as the total amount of insurance carried complies with the coinsurance requirements stated in your policy. Each year, a signed Statement of Values must be submitted to the insurance carrier listing all properties and their values.

Special Perils Form protects covered property against direct loss arising from any cause (such as fire, lightning, theft, vandalism) not specifically excluded within the policy. The advantage of this form is that the insurance company must prove that a loss is specifically excluded in order to deny coverage.

Agreed Value removes the coinsurance requirement and precludes the possibility of a coinsurance penalty in the adjustment of a partial loss. In essence, you and the insurance company agree that the limit of insurance purchased is adequate. Again, the reason for a current Statement of Values.

Replacement Cost Valuation pays for the cost to repair or replace damaged property with like kind and quality without deduction for depreciation. This is important since you could face a substantial loss if you must replace property at today's prices but receive only the depreciated value of the property that was destroyed.

10 Adapted from a presentation by Marketing Associates Insurance Agency, Inc., 154 Wells Avenue, Newton, MA 02159

B. Comprehensive Business Income/Extra Expense

Insures against loss of income (tuition and fees) that you experience due to a suspension of your business when insured property has been damaged by a covered peril. Also includes Extra Expense, which provides reimbursement for the necessary expenses incurred during the period of restoration of damaged property that you would not have incurred if there had been no direct, covered physical loss.

C. Boiler and Machinery

Provides coverage for property against loss due to explosion or breakdown of pressure vessels, central air conditioning equipment, or generators. The basic Property Policy excludes coverage for these types of losses.

Inland Marine (water damage, etc.)

Coverage is provided for Electronic Data Processing Equipment for Hardware, Data & Media, and Extra Expense.

Coverage for Hardware and Data & Media is based on Special Perils Basis, Replacement Cost Valuation as well as Mechanical Breakdown of covered equipment, such as mechanical failure, short circuit, blow-out, or other electrical or magnetic disturbance other than lightning.

Crime

Coverage is provided for *Blanket Employee Dishonesty*, which insures against loss of money and securities that is caused by an employee dishonesty; and Blanket Forgery/Alteration which insures against loss resulting from forgery of checks, drafts, notes, etc., that is caused by someone other than an employee.

Commercial General Liability

Covers your legal liability for Bodily Injury and Property Damage claims arising out of your ownership, maintenance or use of premises, and your operations. Limits are provided on a "Per Occurrence" basis subject to an "Annual Aggregate." Employees and volunteers should be included as Additional Insureds.

Employee Benefits Liability

Provides coverage for any act of negligence, error, mistake or omission in the administration of employee benefits programs.

Sexual or Physical Abuse/Molestation Vicarious Liability

Covers your legal liability for damages because of your *Vicarious Liability* arising out of a *Coverage Incident*.

Vicarious Liability is your indirect legal responsibility for such act or acts of another insured or any of your employees that are the subject of a "coverage incident".

A *Coverage Incident* means any actual, alleged, attempted, or proposed sexual or physical abuse or molestation of any person.

Since this coverage has become an increasingly vital protection for schools, you should be wary of any policies containing a Sexual Abuse Exclusion.

School Board and Trustees Liability

Provides coverage for your legal liability for claims arising out of a *Wrongful Act* of an Insured under the policy.

Insured means the Educational Entity, employees including student teachers and school volunteers, and any elected or appointed members, trustees, or directors of the Educational Entity.

Wrongful Act means any actual or alleged negligent act, error, misstatement or misleading statement, omission or neglect or breach of duty in the performance of duties for the Educational Entity.

It is essential to purchase a policy that includes the Educational Entity itself as an Insured as well as the board members.

Inclusion of *Employment Related Practices* coverage is critical since this will provide protection for the school against claims made by employees arising out of wrongful termination, sexual harassment, discrimination, etc.

Each insurance carrier has a different policy form for School Board and Trustees Liability; therefore, a review of the coverage provided should be made prior to purchasing.

Umbrella

Liability limits are provided in excess of the following typical underlying policies on a "Follow Form" basis:

- General Liability
- Employee Benefits Liability
- School Board & Trustees Liability
- Automobile Liability
- Employers Liability

It is important to note that the Umbrella usually does not provide excess limits over the underlying Sexual Abuse Vicarious Liability.

Follow Form means that the Umbrella coverage will follow the same terms and conditions of the scheduled underlying policies.

D. Business Automobile

Liability

Automobile liability provides coverage for Bodily Injury, Property Damage and Medical Payments claims arising out of the use and operation of covered vehicles. Coverage is also provided for loss caused by Uninsured or Underinsured Motorists.

Hired and Non-Owned Auto Liability coverage is necessary when employees and volunteers use their own personal automobiles in the course of business. That individual's own personal automobile insurance policy would be primary coverage in the event of an accident; however, the liability limits on your corporate policy would provide protection for you if brought into suit as well as additional protection for the individual. It is crucial that Employees and Volunteers are included as Additional Insured.

Physical Damage

Collision coverage for loss or damage to a covered vehicle resulting from a collision or upset.

Comprehensive coverage for loss or damage to a covered vehicle resulting from a cause other than collision or upset, such as Fire or Theft.

E. Workers Compensation

Statutory Benefits are provided for a covered accident or illness sustained by an employee arising out of and in the course of employment.

Employers Liability covers your legal liability for accidents or injuries to employees that are not compensable under statutory benefits.

F. Typical Premium Basis for Rating Insurance Coverages

Property	• Limit of insurance on property • Protection of property, such as internal fire/burglar alarms, distance from fire hydrants and fire stations
General Liability	• Number of students • Number of faculty
Sexual Abuse	• Number of students • Management controls relative to hiring and screening practices
School Board	• Number of board members
Liability	• Financial statements • Bylaws
Umbrella	• Premium size of underlying coverages
Business Auto	• Type of vehicles, cost new • Location of garaging • Usage of vehicles • Number of employees and volunteers
Workers Compensation	• Estimated annual payroll • Classification of employees

Tool VII: Crisis Communication Plan[11]

Basic Rules

- Prepare for the worst
- Remain calm and in control if a crisis occurs
- Be proactive after it occurs
- Never lie to the media
- Develop crisis-response systems
- Plan for worst-case scenarios
- Learn to manage backlash from the media

Steps To Take Before a Crisis Occurs

- Invite staff and colleagues to participate in the development of a plan
- Form an internal task force
- Inform everyone about what to do when a crisis occurs

Steps To Take During a Crisis

- Stay in control
- Keep your target audience in focus
- Have clearly developed messages
- Have clearly defined roles
- Decide who will speak with the media
- Monitor media coverage
- Maintain internal communication
- Provide a quick analysis of the situation and its impact
- Be truthful and honest
- Prepare background documents in advance

11 Some information adapted from Bonk, K., Griggs, H., & Tynes, E. (1999). *The Jossey-Bass guide to strategic communications for nonprofits. A step-by-step guide to working with the media to generate publicity, enhance fundraising, build membership, change public policy, handle crises, and more.*

Prevention and Risk Management

The key to managing a crisis is prevention. When a crisis occurs, the school must be prepared to act, not react. It is important that everyone know the plan and practice the plan to ensure the maximum amount of prevention can be accomplished.

General Rules To Remember When Managing a Crisis

- Develop a crisis management plan before a crisis happens
- Define basic operating principles early
- Be prepared at all times to field a call from the local media about an emergency
- Develop clear messages that focus on people, not programs
- Present a spokesperson with good media skills and refer all media to this person
- Monitor local media coverage as the situation unfolds
- Form a proactive media team in charge of distributing accurate information
- Be available 24 hours a day
- Assume that reporters are in contact with numerous sources of information

Tool VIII: References/Resources

Bonk, K., Griggs, H., & Tynes, E. (1999). *The Jossey-Bass guide to strategic communications for nonprofits: A step-by-step guide to working with the media to generate publicity, enhance fundraising, build membership, change public policy, handle crises, and more*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

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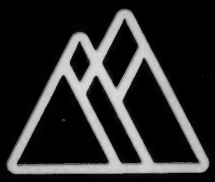
AACTE Policy Clearinghouse
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, Washington, DC

www.edpolicy.org
This clearinghouse is designed to help people access information on education policy at the national, regional, and/or state level.

Links to sample charter school policies
Comprehensive discipline plan for Jefferson Academy, Broomfield, CO
http://204.98.1.2/charter/jeffacademy/discip.html
Includes a comprehensive discipline plan: Goals, standards for treatment of students, referral process, student conduct expectations, consequences to violations of expectations, alternatives to suspensions, appeals, interventions, parent involvement, administrative responsibilities, contact with law enforcement authorities, information requirement and record keeping, and communication of the discipline plan.



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